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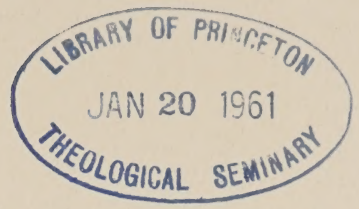
The story of the Presbytery
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The Story of the
Presbytery of Atlanta



The Story of the Presbytery of Atlanta



BY

FRANKLIN C. TALMAGE, D.D.

*Former Secretary of Church Extension
of the Presbytery of Atlanta*



1960

AUTHOR

FRANKLIN C. TALMAGE

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AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

TO THE MEMORY OF

NATALIE BARTON TALMAGE

COMPANION OF NEARLY FORTY-FIVE YEARS

A LIFE-LONG CHRISTIAN

A DEVOTED WIFE AND MOTHER

*whose encouragement and assistance did much to bring into being
the Story of the Presbytery of Atlanta*

FOREWORD

THE work of the author of this history, as a pastor and as an executive of the Presbytery, was always characterized by thoroughness and accuracy. During the period of years that he and I were active members of the same Presbytery, he ranked as the best Presbyter in Atlanta and was one upon whose judgment both the ministerial and lay leaders learned to rely.

The many years of his service in Atlanta—both in the city and in the Presbytery—gave him an unusually good opportunity to become acquainted with the history of Presbyterianism in this section of Georgia. The book which is now being presented to the public is his “magnum opus” and, if you can stand another Latin phrase, has been written “con amore.”

To one who has spent the major part of his Christian ministry in Atlanta the history is fascinating, not to say exciting reading. To all Presbyterians and to loyal members of other denominations it is valuable in showing the beginnings, the development and the trends of a great Church which has been active during a great period of our history. To all Christian readers it will bring a new sense of satisfaction, confidence and faith. This Church and its members have been sufficient for every experience through Him who supplies our strength (Philippians 4:13) and will continue to be so until their work is done.

STUART R. OGLESBY
ATLANTA, GEORGIA
JUNE 16, 1960.

*The Reverend Stuart R. Oglesby, D.D.
was for over 28 years the Pastor of the
Central Presbyterian Church of Atlanta,
Georgia.*

PREFACE

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES opens with the reference to "all that Jesus began both to do and teach." There follows the story of the things he continued to do by his Spirit in the church. The record shows no formal conclusion. God was still at work when the author ceased to write. The continuation of God's work goes on and the story of the church is the extended record. The Story of the Presbytery of Atlanta, if it be correctly told, is but a continued narration of things Jesus did. If it does not have this significance, it is not deserving of the writing.

The church must do its work in the world that surrounds it. It is surrounded by the devices and schemes of men. Great forces are at work, and some of the movements in the world go relentlessly on. One might be fearful were it not for the Providential control which makes "all things work together for good to them that love God." One may not understand the development of the Presbytery of Atlanta unless he watches the effect of the steamboat, the cotton-gin, the revival of missionary interest among students, the railroads, the planting of a great city in its midst, a terrible and devastating war, the constraining love of Christ, the automobile and good roads, the coming of the textile industry. In the midst of all these influences, the people of God were seeking the best ways of bearing their testimony to Christ and his redeeming work, so that souls might be saved and the church made strong.

Had it not been for the destruction wrought by Sherman and his forces, this story might already have been told. Dr. John S. Wilson had long had this matter in mind and had gathered much material for the purpose, only to have it destroyed by enemy forces as he endeavored to withdraw it from the threatened city. The author claims no special qualifications for the writing of the story. Only a sense of obligation for the preservation of a large mass of material

which has been brought to his attention in the performance of duties assigned by Presbytery can justify the preparation of a manuscript.

One gains certain impressions as he proceeds. He is amazed at the story of devoted men of trained mind, of consecrated zeal, and quiet perseverance in the face of many hindrances. Of them truly "the world was not worthy." One could make no mistake—they believed that God had called them. The world gave them little, but they spent themselves in it. Unsung were their patient and often more heroic wives. They passed across the page of history and in their passing gave all their talents in tribute to their Lord, but the church was there when they were gone. "They climbed the steep ascent of heaven through peril, toil and pain; O God, to us may grace be given to follow in their train."'

One is also impressed with the fact that they were human. Their judgment was not always wise, though no one can question their integrity. We might have made greater mistakes had we been in their place, and we are only able to form our judgment in the light of results that followed. It is not for us to criticise them, but rather to profit from their ventures and our fuller knowledge. Let us act more wisely because of their experience. We may judge the future by the past that has unfolded.

One is impressed by the things their faith achieved, and then he is disappointed that sometimes they stopped short of the goal. One notes the monuments to their success and then turns his eyes away from the ventures that failed. Suppose their faith had been greater, suppose their people had followed, and suppose they had not been weary in well-doing! How much more glorious had been the story!

Lastly, one is impressed with the gracious and superintending Providence that followed the church all the way. Humble and godly men called attention to their Lord, and results followed that have no human explanation. Little handfuls of people built churches. Visions of men were made vivid by the illumination of the Spirit. They seized opportunities and God blessed them. Things were made possible because they believed.

The author is aware that such a story as this must inevitably be an interpretation. This cannot be a history where facts are impassionately stated. Emphases are given. Some details are set forth and others are omitted. The very adjectives and adverbs used must give color. The treatment is subject to all the human factors in an author. Suffice it to state that an effort has been made to be

fair, and to draw from a mass of facts a true narrative of a developing Presbytery. The author can only ask the patience of the reader.

The author would acknowledge the many kindnesses shown him in his search for the facts. Assistance has been rendered by those connected with the Historical Foundation at Montreat, with the Library at Columbia Seminary, and with the Atlanta Historical Society. Free access has been given to the Sessional records of many churches.

To the several publishers the author would extend his thanks and acknowledge his indebtedness for permission to make quotations from E. M. Coulter, Louis C. LaMotte, W. W. Sweet, and E. T. Thompson. He is grateful also for personal permission to quote from W. G. Cooper, Thornwell Jacobs, C. F. Monk and J. P. Brown. Credit is given with each quotation, and titles and publishers are indicated in the Bibliography.

Thanks are extended to a great number of unnamed but interested friends who have given encouragement, to a large number of sponsors whose names cannot be listed but who have helped make this volume possible, and to my daughter, Mabel Talmage, for assistance in the work of editing.

Mention is also made, and with much gratitude, of the large encouragement and substantial help tendered by my esteemed and long-time friends, Dr. S. R. Oglesby and Dr. B. H. Dickson, who have both placed me greatly in their debt.

FRANKLIN C. TALMAGE

June 30, 1960
Jacksonville, Fla.

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1

Land



1. VIRGIN TERRITORY

LAND! The one great subject of interest everywhere was LAND. It was the year 1820. An impatient citizenry felt that already the Federal government had delayed too long in extinguishing the claims of the Indians to lands in Georgia. Eighteen years previously Georgia, negotiating with the Federal government, had relinquished its claims to Alabama and Mississippi, and, in return, that government agreed to remove the Indians from Georgia lands. White settlers had already occupied large sections of Alabama and Mississippi while still a part of Georgia was closed to them, and this closed portion included all of what is now the Presbytery of Atlanta (except for a portion of Walton and Newton Counties). Even then in this year 1820, through these lands of Georgia, Creek and Cherokee Indians lived in villages along the streams. They roamed over its forests of oak, beech, maple, gum, hickory, poplar and pine. Deer, bear, rabbits, turkeys and squirrels, which were abundant, furnished food. Fish were plentiful in the streams. Wild grapes, plums and berries yielded fruit in their season. Beaver, fox, and panther provided their pelts, which Indians took to market over the Hightower Trail to Augusta. It was natural that the Indians should cling to the lands of their fathers and look with apprehension at any new encroachment. Conditions of living were good and they had developed a measure of civilization. Al white settlers were regarded as intruders. The Ocmulgee and the Ulcofau (Alcovy) Rivers formed a natural eastern boundary

line, marking off the white settlements. The white settlers looked to the west across the river with covetous eyes. They saw virgin land which they might acquire as their own, there to begin life's adventure anew. They hoped to grow cotton, which was then becoming profitable since Eli Whitney had given to the world the cotton-gin.

Word went from mouth to mouth that at last a treaty had been made with the Indians. Surveyors were abroad in the New Country running lines every nine miles from east to west and from north to south to divide the land into Districts. Then they were to divide it again cutting each nine-mile line into 16 equal parts thus making 256 squares in every district. These are the Land Lots of 202½ acres each into which the entire country was divided. Some of these surveyors were unskilled, and some land lots were irregular in size. Because there were few newspapers, the news traveled slowly, but this latest news brought great excitement to the white settlers east of the Alcovy River. Report was also circulated that these Land Lots were to be distributed by lottery to citizens then living in Georgia who made application and whose names were drawn. The Lots were given to fortunate persons, with no other cost than the nominal expenses of distribution, which approximated \$18.00.

Who were these settlers on the east side of the Alcovy River? They had been arriving for many months from the east and northeast, hoping that the land would soon be opened. This was the New Country of their dreams. So rapidly had the people been coming that at that time, in the six counties of Georgia east of the New Country, one-fifth of all the population of Georgia waited.¹ They included shrewd business men who saw wide opportunities for land trading and speculation. There were adventurers, who sought the thrill of new lands, who anticipated some days of good hunting and fishing and new experience, and who, when the novelty wore, would continue the westward trek. There were persons of a questionable past, and possibly of a questionable future, who would be lost to those that had known them theretofore. Then there was that large group of people who sought a country where they might acquire their own land, where they might build a wholesome home life, rear their families according to their own ideals, and leave behind them, the product of their brain and brawn, an estate for their children. This last group has laid in

1. Comparison of U. S. Census figures.

every place and time the foundations for the America we now know and love.

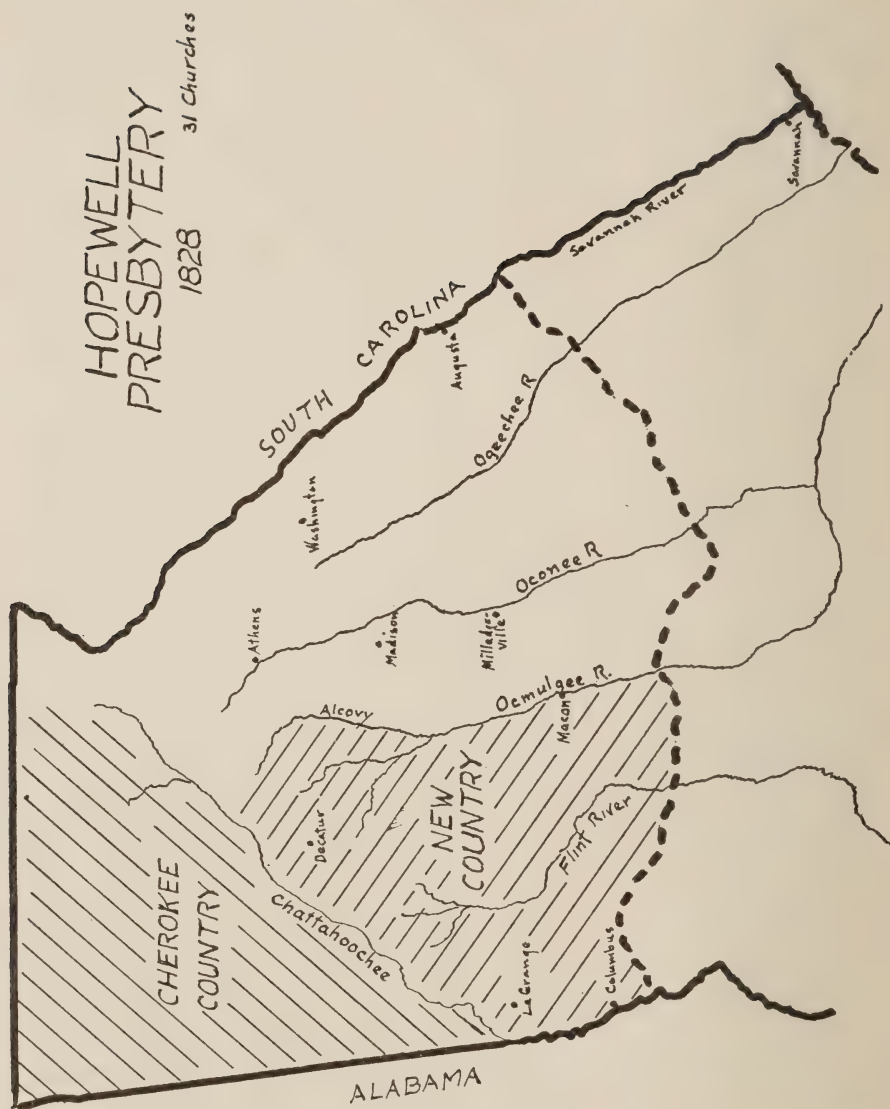
One wonders whence these people had come. At the southeast, settlers began to trickle up the Ocmulgee from the Atlantic coast on flat boats, but travel was greatly increased when the steamboats began to ascend the river as far as Macon in 1827. To the northeast, Athens had been made the center for Franklin College and the University of Georgia. Stage-coaches on well traveled roads reached this educational center from various directions, and they were soon to be able to proceed on a road pointing southwesterly through Jackson County into the New Country. This was an important route for our Presbyterian forebears. To the east, Milledgeville was the Capital of the state, and was also the center of a road system. Migrating people were moving toward Macon through Milledgeville, and also moving westward through Monticello to the Seven Islands and directed toward Indian Springs. Settlers followed still another line of travel from Augusta through Greene County to Madison, and from thence rounded the head-waters of the Alcovy River into Gwinnett County. Rivers had to be crossed and travelers discovered shoals where their wagons could be taken over. Indian trails became roads, principal among them being the Hightower Trail and the Sandtown Trail. Where trails ran in the general north and south direction, they followed the ridges between the rivers. If their direction was east and west, they led from shoal to shoal. A survey of the topography of the country will easily suggest the travel routes. The first gateway to the New Country was at the boundary of Gwinnett County above Lawrenceville. Near this point at Hog Mountain was a military outpost for the protection of white settlers who were approaching from the northeast. A military road was projected to lead from Hog Mountain to a second military outpost to be established at Standing Peachtree, at the junction of the present Peachtree Creek and the Chattahoochee River. Here J. M. C. Montgomery later operated a ferry and served as postmaster. It is not surprising to find that already white settlers were trickling in. Trading posts were being set up near Indian villages. Taverns were appearing along travel routes, and white settlers were becoming common. Among the migrants were a host of Scotch Irish pushing ever westward till they found a resting place. They came through Virginia and the Carolinas. Huguenots were moving from Charleston through Augusta. Quakers were appearing along with Germans and Dutch.

English came from New England. By the time our year 1820 had arrived, under the shadow of the military post at Hog Mountain already about 5,000 persons had occupied land in Gwinnett County. Briefly we have viewed the situation as it appeared when dawn was arising for the Presbytery of Atlanta.

The movement of people during the next ten years was amazing. They used every mode of travel. Some drove a team of mules to a wagon. Some came with ox carts. Some rode in their saddles. A few walked afoot, and some even pushed carts, carrying their few belongings. Their number seems unbelievable, for approximately 100,000 persons moved into the territory within a decade, there to establish their new homes.² If they were so fortunate as to draw a Land Lot (202½ acres) in the state lottery, they moved in to inspect it, to take possession and to develop it. If they were not so fortunate as to draw a lot, they sought to purchase one near that of one of their kindred or friends. Mechanics came to open shops. Lawyers settled in the county-seats to pursue their profession. Doctors located in the new country to establish a practice. Shrewd business men seized the opportunity for speculation. Some astute men sought sites where water-power might be developed and there erected grist-mills by which they would take toll of their neighbors for services rendered. Log houses with four walls and a dirt floor sprang up everywhere, while here and there men of resources built larger and more serviceable homes. Houses being erected, they began to think of more than houses and farms and stock. There must be schools and there must be churches. The state provided no schools, but some funds were made available for a poor school fund. It therefore became the responsibility of citizens to provide for schooling as they could, and, as a result, in many communities Academies sprang up, presided over by learned men, who were introduced into the communities. In many cases these learned men were ministers of the Gospel. It is of interest to our story to note the number of Presbyterian ministers who thus settled within the bounds of the present Presbytery of Atlanta during the first decade. Among them were Rev. John S. Wilson at Lawrenceville, Rev. James Gamble at McDonough, Rev. Alexander Kirkpatrick at Decatur, Rev. Remembrance Chamberlain at Jackson, and Rev. J. Y. Alexander at Newnan. The very continuance of a minister in any given locality at that period depended upon his being teacher as well as minister.

2. See Census figures for 1830.

Briefly we have surveyed the seed-bed in which the seeds of Presbyterianism were planted, and have suggested some of the forces and conditions that influenced its growth.



1

Land



2. PIONEERING

DR. JOHN S. WILSON, who served through this and successive periods, writes after fifty years in the ministry:

Few men in the present day know anything of the toil and suffering it required to lay the foundation of Presbyterianism in western Georgia. It was a day of small things. The seed had to be sown—houses of worship erected, and the scattered sheep gathered. Churches which now contribute thousands to support their pastors and benevolent enterprises of the day were then but a mere handful, without wealth and, indeed, without a disposition to give, had they possessed the means. Hard work and hard fare was the allotment of all laborers in this part of the vineyard.¹

This pioneering age in western Georgia found a great host of people moving in to possess virgin lands. As they settled they were first to build their own homes, however humble. The church at large saw in this migration both a responsibility and an opportunity—a responsibility to care for members moving into an area without churches, and an opportunity to extend the church into new territories. To every denomination the task seemed overwhelming. The Synod of the Carolinas² learned of its first Pres-

1. Wilson, *Dead of the Synod of Georgia*, p. 74.

2. Harmony Presbytery of South Carolina had first extended its area into Georgia, but was divided in 1796 to create the Presbytery of Hopewell. The Synod of the Carolinas was divided in the year 1813 into the Synod of North Carolina and the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia.

byterian constituency established across the Savannah River in the new area of Georgia and therefore enlarged the area of the adjoining presbytery.³ As early as 1796 a Presbytery of Hopewell was erected, embracing all the territory of Georgia. This presbytery felt itself entirely unprepared, with its constituency growing so rapidly in numbers and spreading over an ever widening area. Suddenly it had been faced with two great problems:—how to meet the needs of all the new people moving into the New Country, and what to do with the depleted churches, when large portions of the membership moved westward. Our story, however, deals not with the depleted churches, which were mainly in areas not embraced by the Presbytery of Atlanta, but with the section of the new country into which the people were moving. The “cry of Macedonia” was heard in addresses by the Presbytery of Hopewell to the General Assembly and its mission agencies, and in the call of the new settlers to the Presbytery of Hopewell.⁴

It became evidence that a few men and limited resources must be used wisely. The work was of God. The Presbyterian constituents must be followed and a destitute people must be ministered to. Along one of the principal travel-routes into the New Country, and at the northern tip of Walton County, the very first church was organized (1822) in the present area of the Presbytery of Atlanta, and was named Alcovia for the river at the headwaters of which its membership lived.⁵ Yet to many of the members this church was but a way-station. At a later time, members of this church are found in more westerly areas and particularly in the Cherokee country. Nearly always small, it bore its testimony for about sixty years in a rather restricted and unstable area, until its membership was gone and its name dropped from the roll of churches.⁶ Alcovia Church was located just outside the chief gateway into the New Country, and Fairview Church developed just inside. It was organized in the summer of 1823⁷ two and a half miles from Lawrenceville, for towns were considered less important and good agricultural lands were more highly esteemed. A choice wooded site was selected upon an eminence beside the highway and close to a good spring. A church building was erected before

3. Stacy, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia*, p. 12.

4. Minutes of the Presbytery of Hopewell—Apr. 4, 1828; Aug. 10, 1828; Mar. 31, 1831.

5. Ibid.—Feb. 5, 1823.

6. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 11, 1889.

7. Sessional Records of the Fairview Church.

1825,⁸ and remains in part till this day constructed of the original hewed timbers. To this church was called, in 1824, a young minister named John Simpson Wilson, who was to begin a ministry of over 50 years in the presbytery, destined to influence greatly the Presbytery of Atlanta for all the years to come.⁹

Let us digress here to note the nature of the missionary impulses resulting in the building of Presbyterianism in Georgia. The first decade of the nineteenth century had witnessed some remarkable revival movements in America which had drawn attention to the religious needs of the people on all the frontiers. They had also profoundly influenced many groups of college students. Out of these movements had come the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions with its efforts abroad. There was the offering of young life for mission service. The same impulse for evangelization abroad was also being manifest for efforts on the frontiers in America. Andover Theological Seminary and Princeton Theological Seminary were sending forth young ministers with missionary passion, and many of them were looking to the frontiers as their field of service. They were coming from the Congregational churches of New England¹⁰ and from the Presbyterian churches of New York and New Jersey,¹¹ with their faces turned toward new areas in an expanding America. Eventually young ardent spirits moved into Georgia. Some became minister-teachers and some became itinerant missionaries. The former found communities where the services of a teacher were desired; they established Academies; they often acquired property, and they gathered people together on the Sabbath days, often in the Academy buildings, for divine worship. These churches had ministers only so long as the position of teacher was secure.

The latter group of itinerant missionaries were assigned to wider areas. They traveled by stage-coach, by saddle, or afoot. They were expected to preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments and ordinances, organize churches, and ordain elders after the Presbyterian manner. After a stay of a few months in one place they moved on to another, leaving behind them a group of Presbyterians banded together as a church, but without the regular ministrations of the Gospel. Among these itinerants were often re-

8. Flanigan, *History of Gwinnett County*, p. 360 (Hapeville, Ga.: Tyler & Co.).

9. Minutes of the Presbytery of Hopewell—Apr. 2, 1825.

10. Congregational pioneers—R. Chamberlain, H. L. Deane.

11. Presbyterian pioneers—S. K. Talmage, James Stratton.

cently licensed young men¹² (probationers for the Gospel ministry) who were giving their initial years in frontier work, to return after one or two years to the home presbytery for ordination, and then either to remain in the home area or to return to the land of their adoption. Dr. Sweet, in his *Religion on the Frontier*, makes this estimate of the work of these pioneer missionaries:—

It would seem that it was understood that the first task of the frontier Presbyterian minister was to find those localities where Presbyterians had settled, and with them as a nucleus to begin regular preaching, and when enough members had been gathered to form a church.¹³

The early frontier churches were very small, the average size of the first twenty churches organized in the area of the Presbytery of Atlanta being about 14 members. The teacher-ministers usually transferred their membership to the presbyteries in which they were engaged, and their names are recorded upon the rolls of presbytery. The itinerants covered a wider territory and were within the bounds of any given presbytery but a short time. Their names merely appeared in records as visitors to presbytery if they were in attendance, or they are signed to their reports as missionaries. Among these itinerants were such men as Jonathan Leavitt, James Talmage, Edmund Lanier, George Foote, Jesse Stratton, Ephraim Hopping, Edward D. Smith and others.¹⁴ Confusion concerning them sometimes arose because unauthorized persons posed as ministers, making necessary the carrying of credentials and the assignment of a specified territory.¹⁵

Within a short time it became apparent that Georgia could not depend for its ministers upon New England and the eastern states. Some plan for preparation of ministers nearer to our area was deemed necessary. The Rev. Moses Waddel at the University of Georgia had been instrumental in guiding young men into the ministry, and had trained them privately in theological studies; among such were John S. Wilson, Jos. Y. Alexander, and James C. Patterson, all of whom gave many years of effective service in the Presbytery.¹⁶ To Dr. Thomas Goulding the Synod assigned the task of training young men for the ministry, and out of the service begun by him at Lexington, Georgia came Columbia Theological Semi-

12. Licentiates—R. Chamberlain, Jas. Talmage, J. Y. Alexander.

13. Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier*, p. 60.

14. Note the visitors at several meetings of Hopewell Presbytery.

15. Minutes of the Presbytery of Hopewell, p. 337—Apr. 4, 1829.

16. See Biographical Sketches in Ministerial Directory.

nary of the present day.¹⁷ It will be seen therefore that the ministers in the Presbytery came from different sources. There were the ministers who were born in the South, most of whom received their training in the South, and then there were men who were in derision spoken of as "yankee preachers" and who had come from the Eastern states and New England. The Presbyterian and the Congregational churches were both interested in sending missionaries into the South. Though there was a divergence of theological views in the East, yet when the missionaries began work in the area of the Presbytery of Atlanta, they seemed to work to one common plan. New churches organized by either group were introduced to the Presbytery of Hopewell. Several of the pioneers came from the Congregational Church, notably Remembrance Chamberlain, Hampden C. Carter, and Jonathan Leavitt. The first two named were active for many years in the local Presbytery.¹⁸ The Presbyterian Church owes much to the Congregational Church for aid in the pioneer days.

It will be of interest to follow the planting of Presbyterian Churches in the early days of the Presbytery. We shall be reminded again that the entrance of the new settlers was from the east along the entire line of the Alcovy and Ocmulgee rivers, wherever crossings could be made, with a general trend toward the southwest. Once the higher ground to the west of the river was reached, travel proceeded more easily north and south, and thus there sprang into existence a chain of churches along this line. From north to south these churches are listed with the year of their organization: Fairview (1823), Harmony (1825), Decatur (1825), McDonough (1827), Jackson (1828), and Forsyth (1829). The opening of Magouirt's toll bridge across the Alcovy River gave access to additional land and led to the organization of a church at Covington (1827) and of a church to be called Smyrna (1827).¹⁹ This chain of churches on the eastern edge of the presbytery was followed very quickly by another chain of churches on the southwesterly route across the Presbytery. Beginning from Decatur, they are Philadelphia (1825), Fayetteville (1827), Zebulon or Bethel (1828), Thomaston (1829), Newnan (1828), LaGrange (1829), Greenville (1829), and Providence in Heard County (1831). One more church came into existence before the establishment of a new presbytery, and that as an offshoot of the Fairview Church during

17. See Section VII, Chapter 6.

18. See Appendix, List of Ministers of Hopewell Presbytery.

19. Dates of organization from Minutes Hopewell Presbytery.

the crowding of settlers into Gwinnett County. It was known as Carmel Church (1830).²⁰

A sample town of the early 30's may suffice. Jackson had seventeen houses, nine stores, two doctors, nine mechanic shops, three law offices. There were Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. There was a court-house, a jail, and an Academy. The Academy was in size approximately 45 by 25 feet and was two stories high. That was all.²¹

Let us remember that the first eighteen churches mentioned above were scattered over the western end of the Presbytery of Hopewell, which extended all the way from the Savannah River on the east to the boundary of Alabama on the west. It would not be strange if some of these churches organized by itinerant missionaries should be destitute of regular preaching services. However, at a very early date Presbyterian school-masters were established at Lawrenceville, Decatur, McDonough, Jackson, Fayetteville, and Newnan, thus insuring a pulpit ministry for churches at these points, and for others nearby. At most of the churches services were held but once a month, but at a few twice a month. From other churches came up to presbytery again and again the cry of desolation: Send us supplies! Presbytery sometimes used its authority to direct a nearby minister to hold an occasional service, thus providing at least quarterly worship.²² To meet the destitution further, Presbytery adopted the plan of the three-day and the four-day meetings. The church requesting such a meeting arranged for the place of meeting (perhaps a brush-arbor), while at least three ministers of Presbytery were assigned to visit the church at the appointed time. A three-day meeting usually began on Friday, and a four-day meeting on Thursday.²³ Sunday would be observed as Sacrament Sabbath. On each day there would be three preaching services, each by a different minister, one before noon, one after dinner, and one at "early candle lighting." Sun time was the mode of reckoning. These seasonal meetings were anticipated with eagerness and were often the one vital stimulating force in the church's life. To the small discouraged group, here was sustaining strength for their souls.

We can well understand the need for a sustained religious life

20. Note Minutes of Hopewell Presbytery of corresponding dates.

21. Sherwood, *Gazetteer of the State of Georgia*, p. 119.

22. Minutes of Hopewell Presbytery—May 28, 1823; Aug. 5, 1826; Aug. 6, 1827.

23. *Ibid.*—Aug. 12, 1828.

under the conditions that pioneering creates. There were no conventional aids to moral life where each family lived apart from the next. There were no community traditions to be upheld. Law-enforcement officers lived at a distance and travel was slow. Living was difficult; comforts and conveniences were rare; hours of work were from sun-up to sunset; and youth had no guiding direction. There were always irresponsible men and women. Moral lapses were all too frequent, and intemperance with all its accompanying abuses cursed many parts of the land.

Hear Rev. John S. Wilson as he reviews his experience:

The week was spent in the school room and the Sabbath in the church. On Saturday I went to my field of labor, preaching at night, then preaching twice on Sabbath, and returned home on Sabbath night and was in the school room on Monday morning, often riding thirty miles amid darkness and solitude, having deep streams and dangerous bridges to cross, with no light save the lightning's glare, and no sound save the thunder's roar and the growl of the wolf.²⁴

Behold the spirit of the pioneers and the service which they wrought!

24. Monk, *Life and Work of John S. Wilson*, Sermon quoted, p. 9.

1

Land



3. THE CHEROKEE PROBLEM

THE problem of the Cherokee Indians is presented here because of the relation it bears to Presbyterians and Presbyterianism. Christian work among these Indians had been inaugurated by the Rev. Gideon Blackburn, a Presbyterian minister from Tennessee, about the beginning of the century.¹ He began his work almost single-handed in the vicinity of Chattanooga, and a testimony to his work remains in the name Missionary Ridge. When failing health forced him to give up his work, leadership was taken over by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. The Board developed a chain of missions which extended well into Georgia, and which proved very fruitful in winning the Cherokees to Christ and His way. A high degree of civilization was attained, leading to an organized government for the Cherokee nation. The population of the nation was given in 1826 as 13,563 natives, 147 white men, 73 white women and 1,277 slaves.² New Echota, near what is now the city of Calhoun, Georgia, was made the capital of the nation. This was the people from whom the ingenious Sequoyah came, who produced for them an alphabet.³ They occupied at this time a large part of all land in the State of Georgia west of the Chattahoochee River. A regular newspaper, known as the *Phoenix*, was established in 1828, and printed both in Cherokee

1. Thompson, *Presbyterian Missions in Southern U. S.*, p. 142.

2. Sherwood, *Gazetteer of the State of Georgia*, p. 91.

3. Brown, *Old Frontiers*, p. 482.

and English.⁴ The nation very naturally claimed full possession of all the northwest portion of the State of Georgia. Recent discovery of gold within the area, by attracting white prospectors, had intensified the problem of possession.

The missionaries who had been sent by the Board to work among the Indians were largely Presbyterians and Congregationalists, though there were a few Methodists among them. Names among the missionaries were Worcester, Buttrick, Butler, Trott, Proctor and Thompson. Of special note were Samuel A. Worcester, a Presbyterian, and Elizur Butler, a Methodist.⁵ All of these Missionaries owed their allegiance to the Federal government, which claimed direct authority over the Cherokee lands and guardianship over the Indians themselves. Here was a second claimant.

The State of Georgia had long been in negotiation with the Federal government for the Indian lands, and had grown impatient at the government delays. It now proceeded to press its claim to the lands because they were within the bounds of the state, for within those bounds there could be no divided allegiance. The territory of the Cherokees was accordingly attached to those counties which adjoined them on the south side of the Chattahoochee River. It thus extended Gwinnett County to the Tennessee line. At the close of the year 1829 the state passed an act requiring every person residing in the Cherokee Country to subscribe to the following oath of allegiance:

I, A.B., do solemnly swear (or affirm as the case may be) that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia and uprightly demean myself as a citizen thereof, so help me God.⁶

All Indians residing within the state became subject to the laws of Georgia. The next step was for the state to insist upon the removal of the Indians to the west of the Mississippi River. That removal was accomplished after several years and remains a great blot upon the record of Georgia. Space will not permit a story of the ruthlessness and brutality of the "Trail of Tears," which led the Indians in the winter-time to Oklahoma with appalling suffering and loss of life.⁷ We must limit ourselves to a story of Georgia and of Presbyterianism.

In the midst of these conflicting jurisdictions, we find the mis-

4. Ibid., p. 483, *Charleston Observer*—Oct. 27, 1827.

5. Brown, *Old Frontiers*, p. 490.

6. Flanigan, op. cit., p. 104.

7. Morris, *Romance of Home Missions*, p. 103.

sionaries reluctant to acknowledge the authority of the State of Georgia, and we find the State of Georgia equally insistent upon such acknowledgement. As a result of this determination of the state, during the summer of 1831, the missionaries were arrested along with some prospectors for gold and all charged with residing in the Cherokee Nation without license, or with digging gold.⁸ One might imagine the scenes on the way as they were marched to Lawrenceville by rough and abusive officers to be arraigned for trial. They were chained together, tied to the back of a wagon, and forced to walk 22 miles. After two days of marching they were placed in jail in Lawrenceville. On the first Sabbath in jail they asked the privilege to hold divine services. They were answered, "We view the within request as an impertinent one. If your conduct be evidence of your character and the doctrines you wish to promulgate, we are sufficiently enlightened as to both. Our object is to restrain, not to facilitate their promulgation. If your object is true piety, you can enjoy it where you are."⁹

Upon agreeing to leave the state, several of the missionaries were released; on the other hand, Worcester and Butler refused to acknowledge jurisdiction and take a permit. They were in consequence indicted by a grand jury of which Rev. John S. Wilson of Lawrenceville had been elected foreman, and which included also some members of Fairview Presbyterian Church.¹⁰ Thus in the struggle for jurisdiction, we see Presbyterians on a grand jury indicting a Presbyterian missionary as an offender. A trial was held; they were found guilty, and all consideration of brutal treatment was lightly brushed aside. The court sentenced them to four years in the penitentiary at Milledgeville, but recommended clemency if they would take the oath or leave the state.¹¹ Upon reaching Milledgeville their case was brought to the attention of Gov. George Gilmer. Now Gov. Gilmer had been baptized in infancy and had grown up in the Presbyterian Church. He desired to release the men if they would comply, but they were still determined in their refusal, and appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States.

The high court reviewed the case and Justice John Marshall wrote the opinion reversing the state decision.¹² Andrew Jackson, who was then President of the United States, had engaged in nu-

8. Flanigan, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

9. J. C. Brown, *Old Frontiers* (Sou. Publishers Inc., 1938).

10. Flanigan, *op. cit.*, 107.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

merous skirmishes with the Indians, and in consequence had no love for them. Here was another executive of the day affiliated with the Presbyterian Church. Jackson is reported to have said, "Now that John Marshall has made his decision, let him enforce it."¹³ The state court refused to obey the mandate of the Supreme Court and the governor also refused. After 16 months imprisonment the missionaries accepted a pardon and were released in January, 1833. Thus ended a very unhappy episode in the history of Georgia, in which men of Presbyterian connection, facing conflicting loyalties and endeavoring to perform their civic duties as they saw them, shed no luster upon their church.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

1

Land



4. DEVELOPING PRESBYTERY

THE Presbyterian Church has never been merely a group of separate Presbyterian churches scattered here and there. The group of churches has always composed a unity. Each has been concerned with the others, and all have been concerned with the whole. The Presbytery of Hopewell, which had taken root in the northeastern counties of Georgia, suddenly began to extend its borders until it spread from Augusta to Columbus, and from Washington to Macon. By the evident favor of God, within a single decade, the presbytery, which had reported 12 churches in 1823, reported, in the year 1833, the amazing number of 58 churches, and was listed in the Assembly Minutes as the fourth largest presbytery in the southern area. There had moved into the New Country and had cast their lot with the young Presbyterian Church persons who had been members of Presbyterian, Reformed, Congregational, Huguenot churches and of no church at all. They had come from New England, the eastern states, the Carolinas and Virginia and from Ireland and France. There were farmers, mechanics, shop-keepers, physicians, lawyers and tradesmen. They were old and young, ignorant and learned, rich and poor, influential and humble, adventurous and conservative. They brought various customs, traditions, and aspirations. What a varied group it was, and so many of them strangers to one another. Years elapsed before permanent unity came to them. It was inevitable that many issues would call for solution. This first period of land settlement and home building called

the church to deal with many common matters, and in these the young church must find its way. Phases of common church life were necessarily faced, but this period revealed only the first steps to orderly effort. What did these years bring to the attention of the church? What were their common experiences and their common tasks?

Because the churches were weak and isolated, they needed help and encouragement. They looked to presbytery and expected much. Where before it had sometimes been difficult to obtain a quorum,¹ meetings of presbytery became great occasions of stimulation and strength. At these meetings presbytery seems to have faced its task courageously and against insurmountable difficulties. The opening of the New Country had caught the imagination of the church and its ministers, as well as of its land seekers. Rev. John S. Wilson had invited the Presbytery of Hopewell to meet for the first time in the New Country at the Fairview Church in the late summer of 1825, that they might see for themselves the new work. William Moderwel had come all the way from Augusta where he was pastor, and John Davidson, an elder, had accompanied him from Lincolnton. Fourteen members of Presbytery were present. Let one imagine the impressions of this trip of over 150 miles by stage-coach and saddle, with nearly two weeks of time consumed in attendance. One might also wonder at the feelings of the new church in their new building, when members of Presbytery came, and the first pastor of their church was installed. Great preachers were there in this frontier church. They were entertained in the homes of the people. Withal it was a significant occasion for the host church and for the visitors, and its memory was treasured for years among the people.²

Among the first of the undertakings of the growing Presbytery was the organization of an Education Society,³ whose chief purpose looked toward the preparation of ministers for the expanding church. Education societies were not uncommon in other parts of the state, sometimes on a broader base than that of providing a Gospel ministry, and often across denominational lines, although "largely supported by Presbyterians."⁴ At Thyatira Church, in May, 1823, at the first Presbytery meeting in which the New Country was represented, seven men made up the Presbytery, and

1. See Minutes of Hopewell Presbytery at Hebron Church—Oct. 18, 1822.

2. For details, Minutes of Hopewell Presbytery—Aug. 6, 1825.

3. Sherwood, *Gazetteer of the State of Georgia*, p. 249.

4. Minutes of Hopewell Presbytery—May 24, 1823.

they organized an Education Society. Let us look at these seven men. There were Rev. Edward Pharr and Elder Joseph Ratchford from the home church of Thyatira and hosts to the Presbytery. There was James Mayne from Alcovia, the only church in the New Country, bringing the cry, "Come over and help us." There was Jesse Stratton down from the Congregational Church of Connecticut on a missionary tour of service. Then there were three other men upon whom the major responsibility fell: Dr. Moses Waddel, president of the University of Georgia; Dr. Thomas Goulding, pastor at Lexington and shortly to establish Columbia Seminary; and Dr. James Nisbet, an elder from the Athens Church.³ These three were to take a leading part in the Education Society. This society gathered funds to assist promising young men in their educational preparation; it stimulated efforts for education on the frontier; and it studied means for the establishment of institutions of learning which would bring education within the financial range of the frontier youth. Dr. Wilson described this as "the most important enterprise ever entered upon by any ecclesiastical body in the state."⁵ Many ministers who later served the church with rare devotion received their early assistance through this Education Society. Illustrative of the educational interest of the Presbytery, we note that the Rev. James Gamble had opened a school in McDonough, known as the McDonough Academy.⁶ He seems to have been a teacher of note. Students came from outer areas and boarded with families near the Academy. The board was advertised at the rate of \$20.00 per quarter, and tuition was "5 or 7 dollars a quarter according to class."⁶

Another enterprise of this young vigorous church was the Domestic Missions Society. One can appreciate the difficulty the Presbytery would find in obtaining ministers for the new churches and in supporting them if they could be obtained. The marvelous opportunity of the day called for some determined and systematic method of assisting the churches and of entering new areas. Ministers led in the organization of a society "to form new congregations, to foster infant and feeble churches, and to effect settlement of ministers as pastors."⁷ They proceeded upon the premise that each church was by its very nature a Missionary Society. We have the record of such a society formed in Macon in 1830, and, at a later

3. Minutes of Hopewell Presbytery—May 24, 1823.

5. Wilson, *Dead of the Synod of Georgia*, p. 29.

6. *Charleston Observer*—Jan. 10, 1835.

7. *Ibid.*—May 12, 1827.

period, of resolutions adopted. This resolution was presented by Hon. E. A. Nisbet, a legal mind of the day: "That Christianity alone can secure a permanency of our political institutions and social privileges, and that it is peculiarly the duty of Christians to furnish the Gospel to the destitute of the state."⁸ Another resolution was presented by Dr. Samuel K. Talmage, President of Oglethorpe University: "That it is the duty and privilege of the strong within the Presbytery to sympathize with the afflictions and wants of the feeble, and especially in compliance with Christ's command to afford them, if possible, the Gospel."⁸ Again and again as Presbytery closed its sessions it enjoined upon each minister the responsibility for spending 14 days or two Sabbaths in frontier preaching in destitute churches or places.⁹ Specific assignments were made in 1826, as follows: John S. Wilson, Alonzo Church, and Edward Pharr were to work in Hall County; Remembrance Chamberlain and George Foot were assigned work in Newton County and at Indian Springs; Alexander Kirkpatrick was assigned to Henry and Fayette Counties; and John Brown and Benjamin Gildersleeve were assigned to work in Monroe, Bibb, and Crawford Counties.¹⁰ These assignments bear special interest because they immediately bore fruit in the organization of churches at McDonough, Jackson, Covington, Fayetteville, Milledgeville, Macon, Smyrna, and Gainesville. Upon this Domestic Missionary Society lay the responsibility for supplying these churches with preaching. Arrangements were made in 1826 to place four missionaries in the field. Edmund Lanier, H. C. Carter, George Foot, and James C. Patterson served as missionaries of the Society. Funds were always uncertain and duration of missionary service was short, but Newnan and LaGrange Churches were born as a result of the investments. Here was the beginning of a vital work which has borne abundant fruit through the years, and yet how often neglected or poorly furnished.

It was not many years before the young Presbytery turned its attention to the organization of a Foreign Mission Society.¹¹ Young John S. Pinney offered himself for mission service and went to Liberia.¹² In the summer of 1833, this society gathered contributions to send to the Foreign Mission Board for his support.¹³ Early letters

8. Sessional Records of Macon First Church—Mar. 2, 1838.

9. Minutes of the Presbytery of Hopewell—May 23, 1823.

10. *Ibid.*—Apr. 10, 1826.

11. Minutes of the Presbytery of Hopewell—Mar. 31, 1832.

12. *Ibid.*—Nov. 28, 1829.

13. *Ibid.*—Aug. 13, 1833.

to the church are extant in the *Charleston Observer*.¹⁴ The resources of the church were very limited, but financial support of this Foreign Mission Society though small, was continuous.

Tract Societies awakened interest. Literature and reading material were almost non-existent on the frontier and efforts were made to furnish some simple tracts and leaflets. In Lawrenceville was a society known as the Lawrenceville Female Tract Society "largely made up of Presbyterian women." Record shows that an offering was received in February, 1827 after morning worship for the purpose of purchasing printed religious material for distribution. This offering amounted to \$13.06¼, and prompted an order of 40,000 pages.¹⁵ To promote further the reading of good literature the Presbytery encouraged subscription to the *Charleston Observer*.¹⁶ This paper was published weekly in the city of Charleston by Rev. Benjamin Gildersleeve at a subscription price of \$3.50 to city subscribers and \$3.00 to county subscribers.¹⁷ It provided wholesome devotional reading and was also a medium for supplying information concerning the Presbyterian Church and other religious activities nearby and afar. At a later date the full minutes of Presbytery were printed in this paper and thus made available to its readers.¹⁸

Presbytery could not ignore the liquor evil. Hear a report from Hall County under a date line of Gainesville, 1831: "Since last spring five persons came to a premature grave by intemperance, two were murdered, one poisoned, one hung, and one perished on a cold night."¹⁹ At a lodging place on one of the important stage-coach routes, a current publication announced the existence of a "drunkery."²⁰ The same year this report came from Henry County:—"We are compelled to state that with a large portion of the community, the evil of drinking is unchecked, grog shops abound, the elective franchise is corrupted, and we blush to add, professors of religion, and even ministers of the Gospel, often stand aloof and even oppose our efforts."²¹ One of the influential and prominent ministers of the Presbytery, whose name need not be mentioned, became so enslaved as to destroy the tranquility of

14. These letters may be found in the early issues of 1833.

15. *Charleston Observer*—May 12, 1827.

16. Minutes of the Presbytery of Hopewell—Mar. 31, 1832.

17. *Charleston Observer*—May 12, 1827.

18. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Mar. 25, 1836.

19. *Charleston Observer*—Feb. 5, 1831.

20. Sherwood, *Gazetteer of the State of Georgia* (see Flat Shoals).

21. *Charleston Observer*—June 18, 1831.

his home, to discredit his ministry, and to dishonor the Christian religion, and after extended hearings he was deposed from the ministry.²² Temperance Societies were created to combat this evil.

This period was marked by some interesting periods of revival. Presbytery meetings were often blessed. Alexander Kirkpatrick tells of a meeting of Presbytery held at the Decatur Church in the symmer of 1827. The Presbytery seemed to touch a high spiritual note and there was a sense of deep feeling and anxious inquiry.²³ There were some applications for membership in the church in the days immediately following. And then a month later, at a Saturday service preparatory to communion, more candidates asked for admission to the church. Numbers remained later after the evening service on Saturday and others came in the early morning on Sabbath to meet with the Session. The Session was busy until the hour of worship examining applicants. From the meeting of Presbytery until the communion service one month later 33 persons were received into the Decatur Church.²³ In the year 1831 there developed in the church at Athens under the ministry of Rev. Nathan Hoyt a very unusual season of grace.²⁴ The entire city was stirred with unusual interest manifest in every church and also among the students of the college. Daniel Ingles, later to become an evangelist of the Presbytery, was in college at the time. Rev. John S. Wilson of Fairview Church visited Athens along with others to witness the experience and was deeply impressed. A meeting of Presbytery had been set for August in Fairview, and immediately after that meeting there was manifest a great revival in Lawrenceville which extended into the adjoining counties of Walton and DeKalb.²⁵ A certain Charles W. Rawson, formerly of Connecticut, was converted at Lawrenceville during the revival, and at the age of 39, went immediately to work as a missionary among the Chickasaws in Mississippi.²⁶ Under these influences about 200 persons joined the various churches.²⁷ The Fairview Presbyterian Church reported 38 additions at this season. Decatur Church, that same year, under the leadership of Rev. Arthur M. Mooney, reported 33 additions to membership.²⁸ This contagion

22. Minutes of Hopewell Presbytery (several meetings 1832-3).

23. *Charleston Observer*—Oct. 27, 1827.

24. *Ibid.*—June 25, 1831.

25. *Charleston Observer*—Oct. 15, 1831.

26. *Ibid.*—Aug. 2, 1834.

27. *Ibid.*—Oct. 15, 1831.

28. Statistics of the General Assembly—1832.

often spread through the area, and the Lord was adding to the church those that were being saved.

Among the issues before the church of that period was one concerning the gravity to be maintained in observing the Lord's Supper. The long narrow tables were used in the aisle. By turns groups of persons gathered about the table and partook of communion, and then returned to their seats as others gathered at the table. In certain places the practice had been adopted of singing psalms as the communicants moved to and from their pews. The Presbytery was asked to express itself as to the propriety of such practice.²⁹

Again there arose divergence in practice in receiving members into the church. At some places the reception was very informal, at others more solemn. There seemed to be a question as to what should be expected in the way of a profession of faith. Accordingly a committee was appointed to study the matter and to draft a formula to submit to the Presbytery. Such a formula was drafted and was transcribed in full in the minutes and was uniformly used thereafter within the bounds of the Presbytery.³⁰ It corresponds largely with that used in the church today.

As slaves were brought into the New Country, their evangelization became a matter of concern. The legislature, however, had at a previous time opposed the activities of colored preachers. The Synod conformed to the action of the legislature and had not encouraged colored preachers.³¹ At this period the number of slaves was small and the Sessions simply received them as members into the churches. An entry of 1828 in the Macon minutes shows as being received "Patsey Humphries, a free woman of color."³² Minutes of Fairview Church of April, 1837, show that Pompey, a slave of John N. Alexander, was received. As the institution of slavery became more widely prevalent, it was inevitable that the Presbytery should face it with growing concern.

An issue of morals arose in the Alcovia Church. A woman whose marriage had broken had drifted westward being caught in the great migration. She lost complete touch with her husband in the years that followed. As might be anticipated, springtime came again and she found a lover. This led to a second marriage. The

29. Minutes of the Presbytery of Hopewell—Aug. 8, 1825.

30. Ibid.—Apr. 8, 1826.

31. Minutes of the Presbytery of Hopewell—Mar. 31, 1832.

32. Sessional Record of Macon First Church—Nov. 16, 1828.

Session did not regard this as a mere case of bigamy, but came to the Presbytery to ask serious counsel.³³

It is easy to see how, with the extending of the Presbytery into the New Country, there developed two sections of the Presbytery, one with all the issues and problems of the more settled country, and the other with all the issues and problems of the frontier. The territory covered was much too extensive for the slow travel of that day, and it is natural that the idea of a new Presbytery should be raised. Such a plan commended itself to the judgment of the Presbyters. A recommendation was sent to the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, and that body at its meeting in December, 1833, set up a new Presbytery to be called Good Hope (later changed to Flint River). The first meeting was set for McDonough, Georgia.

STRENGTH OF THE
PRESBYTERY OF ATLANTA
As seen in 1834

Though the Presbytery of Atlanta was at that time a part of the Presbytery of Good Hope, figures are given only for the area of the Presbytery of Atlanta.

Number of Churches	19
Number of Ministers	9
Whole number of Communicants	1,175
Number of Sabbath Schools
Sabbath School Enrollment
Total Gifts to Benevolences	\$ 410
Churches Holding Service Each Sabbath	0
Churches Added to the Roll in the Period 1820-34	19
Churches Erased from the Roll	0

33. Minutes of the Presbytery of Hopewell—Mar. 25, 1833.

II

Building A Culture



1. FACING THE CHANGES

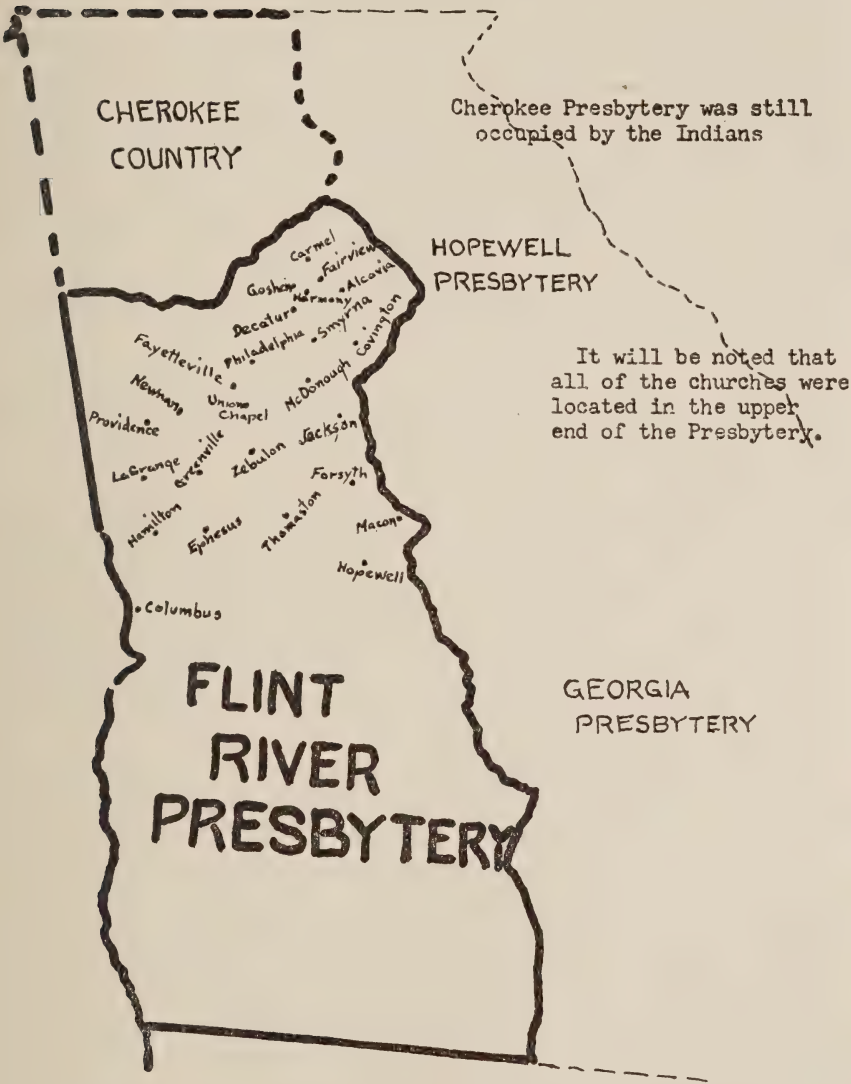
ON THE 20th day of March in the year 1834, the Presbyterian Church of McDonough was the scene of much interest and excitement.¹ Six years earlier, the ministers and elders of the Presbytery of Hopewell had come to meet there, but now they were coming to set up a new Presbytery. Distances were long, travel was difficult, and to the southwest new churches were continually springing into being. Presbyterian organization and government must be made more compact so that elders might be more regularly in attendance. The time had arrived to take the proposed step. The Synod of South Carolina and Georgia had taken action and had provided the authority for the division of the Presbytery of Hopewell so that

“that part of the Presbytery . . . on the west side of the Ocmulgee River, together with the counties . . . of Newton, Walton, Gwinnett, Campbell, Carroll and Heard be denominated the Presbytery of Good Hope, to meet in McDonough on Thursday before the fourth Sabbath in March next at 11:00 o’clock A.M. to be opened with a sermon by Edwin Holt, or in his absence by the Senior member present, who is to preside until a Moderator is chosen”

McDonough was near the center of the large group of churches then existing in that part of the Presbytery of Hopewell which was to be set off, and roads converged thither from every direction. Ed-

1. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Mar. 20, 1834.

MAP OF FLINT RIVER PRESBYTERY
as it was established in 1834.



All of the churches existing at the time of organization
are indicated and named.

win Holt had come from the important church at Macon to preach the opening sermon. John S. Wilson had come from Lawrenceville, where he was pastor and teacher. James Gamble was host minister and his Academy was open to inspection. Michael Dickson had just moved to Decatur, and was waiting to be received into Presbytery. James C. Patterson had come up from Forsyth to the very spot where he was ordained six years previously. Remembrance Chamberlain was excused from his Academy at Jackson. Thomas Scott had come from LaGrange, J. Y. Alexander from Newnan, and Wm. K. Patton from Fayetteville. There were ten ministers present. Seven of them were school-teachers as well as ministers. Hampden C. Carter was an itinerant missionary. Fourteen ruling elders were present. Let us call the roll of these elders: Eli Hood of Fairview, Thomas Russell of McDonough, James Mayne of Alcovia, Lewis Fitch of Macon, John Pharr of Jackson, Matthew Caldwell of Forsyth, James Peden of Decatur, James H. Cameron of LaGrange, James Scott of Zebulon, Samuel B. Hunter of Bethesda, Robert Rounsaville of Smyrna, William Conine of Philadelphia, Joseph H. Cunningham of Fayetteville and John Reeves of Union Chapel.

This Presbytery which was denominated Good Hope by the Synod found this name confusing and therefore undesirable and accordingly sent up to the next Synod the request that the name be changed to the "Presbytery of Chattahoochee."² That name was not approved by Synod because the Chattahoochee River ran also through Hopewell Presbytery. As a result the Presbytery was called the "Presbytery of Flint River," which name it held until it was divided into two sections in 1866.³

We may inquire into the factors that molded the vision of these men, that enlarged their faith and influenced their decisions. A decade of history found the land settled. The mere adventurers had moved on. Land speculators found their business declining. Those not suited to frontier life had returned to their former homes, or in their restlessness had sought other lands. In the stead of those leaving had come a more stable group determined to build the new country. Small towns had arisen. Roads had been laid out and bridges built. Routes to market were well established. Schools under trained leadership were attracting youth to their portals. The original log cabins of the pioneers had been enlarged. Fields were becoming productive. Churches were being appreciated by

2. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Fall 1834.

3. Minutes of the Synod of S. Ca. and Ga.—Fall 1834.

the more devout, and church buildings had been erected throughout the land. We begin to see the templed hills and the nearby churchyards. In the church, the first two young men called to the ministry from the area, Joseph L. Jones from LaGrange, and Telemachus F. Montgomery of Fairview Church were ordained at Columbus in March 1836.⁴ No longer was everything in transition. There was more permanency and a culture began to develop. Newspapers were coming in by mail routes which had been established along stage lines already woven into a network. To illustrate the stage coach travel, we find this advertisement in a Milledgeville paper of 1832.⁵ Milledgeville to Washington, D. C., which was a distance of 654 miles, could be traveled by stage for the fare of \$45.00. Stages were advertised to make from 75 to 80 miles a day, leaving in the morning at from 3 to 5 A.M. and traveling till 6 to 8 P.M., changing horses, of course, at intervals.

Two principal market centers developed in the cities of Macon and Columbus. Once the cotton crop had been gathered, a time was set and all the cotton planters set a time to go together to market. Ox carts and mule teams and their drivers lined the roads in strings which extended as much as half a mile in length. They traveled by day and camped on the roadside by night. They sold their cotton to the highest bidder, traded for the year's supplies and returned home. One can well imagine the growth of business at these market centers, and particularly at Macon which was the important business center for most of the Flint River area. The good and the bad were there. From thence influences of vice worked back into the country, and from thence came also funds consecrated to God to enlarge the Domestic Missions enterprise. Even rumblings were heard of war with the Creek Indians, to which young men were marching off to South Alabama.

We cannot ignore the land excitement which arose with news of the opening of the Cherokee Country beyond the Chattahoochee River. Lots had been drawn in 1832⁶ and fortunate holders awaited the word from the government to migrate. That word came in the very year of 1834 when the new Presbytery was formed.⁶ A new migration began. Some believed that their present lands were worn out and that new lands must be acquired. Others had

4. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Mar. 26, 1836.

5. Milledge Federal Union—July 5, 1832.

6. Coulter, *Georgia, a Short History* (Chapel Hill, N. C.: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1947).

heretofore been tenants and saw opportunity to find lands of their own. The spirit of adventure came again into the air. Occasionally entire church communities moved. Sometimes the leading spirits left, and the weak membership remaining lost heart. To men of vision in the church, this excitement meant the opening of new centers of opportunity. The first stirrings of Cherokee Presbytery followed the entering of the new missionaries. Barrington King and Nathaniel Pratt led a colony out of the malaria infested Liberty County to the high pine lands just over the Chattahoochee River, where conditions would be more healthful, and where a mill could be established.⁷ To the town which they had established not far from the Hightower Trail they gave the name of Roswell and planned cultural advantages. They planted a church in 1839 as a vital part of the life of the colony.⁸ This Roswell colony is of special note because the direction of its migration was to the north-westward, whereas the predominant movement of travel was to the southwest. At the same time that churches were springing up all through the Cherokee Country, some of the churches already established in the earlier settlements were profoundly affected by removals. Harmony Church in DeKalb County had entirely disappeared,⁹ and its exact whereabouts is now unknown. Providence Church in Heard County likewise disappeared.¹⁰ In a brief period of about seven years Alcovia Church dropped in membership from 111 to 22.¹¹ The badly used land in the neighborhood did not at any later time attract settlers, and the church slowly died out. Even the membership of Decatur Church, then listed at 180,¹² decreased by 50 in five years. Beyond the Chattahoochee within our present bounds came four new churches: West Point (1837),¹³ Franklin (1836),¹⁴ Carrollton (1841),¹⁵ and Brainerd (1842).¹⁶

Because towns were small, the growth of churches depended upon the widening influence of church centers. As a result constituencies were very widely scattered. Poor roads of the day made regular attendance for the distant members well nigh impossible. Resourceful churches followed the plan of erecting at distant

7, 8. Sessional Records of Roswell Church.

9. Name last appears on the roll of churches in 1834.

10. Name last appears on the roll of churches in 1837.

11, 12. See comparative statistics in General Assembly Minutes.

13. Sessional records of West Point Church.

15. Sessional records of Carrollton Church.

14, 16. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Mar. 25, 1836 and Mar. 29, 1843.

points in the parish auxiliary chapels for the convenience of the distant members. McDonough Church erected a building in the Timber Ridge community as early as 1835.¹⁷ Fairview Church had a building in Lawrenceville in 1839.¹⁸ Jackson Church had erected a building in the western section of Butts County in the early thirties.¹⁹ Covington Church owned a place of worship down near the South River.²⁰ These service chapels in the widened territories often developed sufficient interest to encourage a new church organization. Thus we find Union Chapel set off from Fayetteville Church in 1833,²¹ Goshen Church in Gwinnett County set off from Fairview in 1834,²² Friendship from Zebulon in 1835,²³ Long Cane (Loyd)²⁴ and Ebenezer²⁵ set off from LaGrange in 1836 and 1837, respectively. Bethany grew out of McDonough and Covington in 1842,²⁶ and Jackson set off Fellowship in 1843.⁷

For a brief period in the 40's there developed a certain amount of traffic on the Chattahoochee,²⁸ which was not destined to a long life because of the coming of the railroads. It was during this period that the town of Franklin drew a population, among whom were a few Presbyterians who moved in and organized a church in 1836.²⁹ In the town of Campbellton a Presbyterian Church was reported in 1840,³⁰ which seems to correspond to one on the Presbytery roll by the name of Salem.³¹ Both of these churches were very small, and because they were never firmly established soon disappeared.

NEW SCHOOL CONTROVERSY

This was the period of the great New School controversy which resulted in a cleavage in the Presbyterian Church. With reference to

17. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Aug. 25, 1835.
18. Flanigan, *History of Gwinnett County*, p. 360.
19. See Deed at Butts County Courthouse.
20. Black, *History of Bethany Church*.
21. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Mar. 31, 1833.
22. Sessional Record of Goshen (Norcross) Church.
23. Minutes Flint River Presbytery—Sept. 3, 1835; Atlanta Presbytery—Apr. 11, 1905.
24. Sessional Record of LaGrange Church—Mar. 26, 1837.
25. *Ibid.*—Dec. 10, 1837.
26. Sessional Record of Bethany Church.
27. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 4, 1843.
28. Sherwood, *Gazetteer of the State of Georgia*, p. 141.
29. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Mar. 25, 1836.
30. White, *Statistics*, p. 144.
31. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 5, 1842.

this controversy, Dr. W. W. Sweet in his *Religion on the American Frontier* states that there were four principal causes of controversy: (1) the operation of the Plan of Union; (2) the conflict between the American Home Mission Society and the Assembly's Board of Missions; (3) the doctrinal controversy; and (4) the question of slavery.³² These controversies appear in all the courts of the church and occupied a prominent place in the religious press, but only in a very limited way did they agitate the rank and file of the church in the bounds of the Presbytery of Flint River. As a rule the people followed the leadership of their ministers, and the heat of controversy was almost entirely avoided in meetings of Presbytery and Synod.

Practically, the discussion, as it affected the local churches, was in the matter of government. Shall the church be Presbyterian or Congregational in government? As was previously noted, the Congregationalists and Presbyterians had worked in full harmony in the establishment of Presbytery, the Congregationalists recognizing the need of some unity. All ministers and churches, therefore, affiliated with presbytery and the Presbyterian Church. The American Missionary Society was a pioneer interdenominational society, though mainly supported by Congregationalists and Presbyterians.³³ With the extension of the frontier work, the Presbyterian Church organized its own Board of Domestic Missions,³⁴ and both the Presbytery of Hopewell and the Presbytery of Flint River at an early date established cooperation with that Board. Within a few years there were no workers in this area affiliated with the American Home Mission Society. One can detect some indirect effects of the controversy in the insistence upon attendance at Presbytery by ministers and representatives,³⁵ in the requirement that all elders subscribe to the Confession of Faith, in the requirement of the same subscription by some members of the church upon admission,³⁶ and in the visitation by presbytery to individual churches for the correction of abuses. Concerning the doctrinal position of the church, the Presbytery of Flint River adhered almost unanimously to the Old School³⁷ with its acceptance of the Westminster Standards without reservation. The Salem Church near Campbellton, organized in 1840 by Rev. Hampden

32. Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier*, p. 100.

33. Ibid., p. 651 Univ. of Chicago Press, 1951, Chicago, Ill.

34. Minutes of the General Assembly—1828.

35. Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier*, p. 102.

36. Sessional Record of LaGrange Church—June 7, 1828.

37. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Apr. 6, 1839.

Carter, seems to have been the only church to affiliate with the New School Presbytery of Etowah.³⁸ In 1842 Salem Church appealed to and was received by the Presbytery of Flint River,³⁹ and Mr. Carter also returned to the church of his early association. It is distressing to note that the spirit of controversy remained in the Salem Church till it ceased to exist. Some of the members withdrew to the Philadelphia Church,⁴⁰ and their descendants are still active in church life.

SLAVERY

Before the General Assembly, which at that time was nation-wide, was continually brought the question of slavery. As an institution it was accepted by this entire section of the country, which was natural, because about one-fourth of the entire population was slave. Many of the ministers were slave holders, among these being John S. Wilson,⁴¹ J. C. Patterson,⁴² Wm. K. Keith,⁴³ and S. J. Cassels.⁴⁴ Continually, efforts were made to reach them with the Gospel. In the Fairview Church the records of 1840 show services planned for colored people on the second Sabbath of each month. Masters were continually urged to teach their slaves and to afford them the opportunities of the Gospel. Churches were required to report upon the number of colored members.⁴⁵ Sabbath schools were organized to teach them. The minutes of the La-Grange Church show the organization of a religious class in 1846. Bethany Church speaks of a Sunday School and of the use of Jones' Catechism.⁴⁶ Galleries were built in churches for the use of slaves: one in Roswell may be seen today. One of Georgia's sons, Rev. C. C. Jones, gave himself for several years as a missionary to colored people.⁴⁷ His catechism was used within our bounds. Slaves were received into the churches with the consent of their masters. The Griffin record of October 4, 1847 is as follows: "Barbara, a woman of colour, the property of Sister Cash, presented herself for

38. Minutes of New School Assembly.

39. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 5, 1842.

40. Sessional Record of Philadelphia Church—May 20, 1849.

41. Flanigan, *History of Gwinnett County* (see list of slave owners).

42. See above, and also Sessional Records of Griffin Church—Feb. 7, 1856.

43. Sessional Records of Griffin Church—Aug. 21, 1851.

44. Sessional Records of Macon First Church—June 22, 1839.

45. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 6, 1848.

46. Sessional Record of Bethany Church.

47. See *Ministerial Directory*, C. C. Jones.

examination (her mistress being present and consenting thereto) was examined on experimental religion and received."

On the other hand the presbytery was at times very emphatic on the matter of Abolition. In September 1835, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That we as a Presbytery do censure in the highest degree of which we are capable and impolitic and unchristian conduct of infatuated people called abolitionists, and that we never have given and never will give them the least countenance, believing that if their system of emancipation could be effected in the way they propose, it would eventually make our beloved country nothing less than one widespread field of human blood.

In the following year another resolution was adopted which included the following items: the declaration that the institution is "nothing else than the continuance of customs and the exercise of rights which are recognized not only in our Confession of Faith, but in the Bible; and which have been coeval with the existence of the church itself."⁴⁸ Resolution, "That it is the opinion of this Presbytery that Domestic Slavery is not forbidden in the Scripture; and that consequently no church judicatory has any right to censure and much less to exclude from the Communion of the church any of its members for holding slaves."⁴⁸ As one reads these resolutions, he can feel something of the heat and resentment which was developing in the Church.

BOUNDARY CHANGES.

Certain boundary changes for presbytery and synod took place during this period. Population changes, expansion of the territory occupied by the Presbyterian Church, and development of modes of travel all called from time to time for boundary changes. While our interest in this historical sketch concerns only that portion of territory occupied by the present Atlanta Presbytery, it must be remembered that the church was continuing to move southward with the settling population until the chain of churches extended as far as the Florida State line. In 1842 the Cherokee County was officially made a part of the Presbytery of Flint River,⁴⁹ and the church of Macon was removed and added to the Presbytery of

48. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Mar. 28, 1836.

49. Minutes of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia—Fall 1842.

Hopewell, and was never again in close association with the churches of our territory. In 1840, the lower tier of counties of Georgia was set off into a Presbytery of Florida.⁵⁰ Then in 1843 the Cherokee counties were set off as the Presbytery of Cherokee.⁵¹ So wide a territory as the combined states of Georgia and South Carolina made synod unwieldy, and the Presbytery of Flint River was rarely represented in Synod, because it met almost altogether in South Carolina or in the nearby city of Augusta. Hence a division was resolved, and by order of the General Assembly the first Synod of Georgia met in the year 1845 in Macon.

The interests of the church at large during the period became apparent. The Presbytery passed the following resolution in the spring of 1840: "Resolved, that the following objects be recommended to our churches as primarily worthy of their annual aid by contributions to be taken at their communion season or at such times as the churches may select: (1) The Presbyterial and Commissioners' Fund to be taken early in the year; (2) The Domestic Missions Fund; (3) The Education Fund; and (4) The Foreign *M*issionary Fund. We must note that the General Assembly met usually in the city of Philadelphia. Travel was inconvenient and costly, and from the first planting of the Presbyterian Church in our area until the Presbytery of Atlanta was erected (nearly 40 years), only three ruling elders had attended the General Assembly from the area.⁵² Ministers had frequently attended, but the attendant expense of travel was provided by voluntary offering in the churches. When there was insufficient money, the Presbytery was not represented. Occasionally no commissioners were elected because of an empty treasury (See 1842). This was the Commissioners' Fund. The Foreign Missionary Fund is self-explanatory. From its beginning the Presbytery was sensitive to the needs of an unevangelized heathen world. Resources were very limited and the struggle for survival within our bounds precluded large gifts to world missions. Offerings were regularly made. The religious press provided information. The churches adopted what was known as the "Monthly Concert of Prayer."⁵³ This was usually a mid-week meeting devoted to the presentation of missionary information, to a season of prayer and intercession, and was frequently the occasion for a spe-

50. Minutes of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia—Fall 1840.

51. *Ibid.*—Fall 1843.

52. See Appendix—List of Commissioners.

53. Sessional Record of the Griffin Church.

cial offering. A later chapter must be reserved for accounts of Education and Domestic Missions.

II

Building A Culture



2. SEEKING AN EDUCATION

AS SETTLEMENTS and homes became more permanent, the settlers manifested concern about education, and this concern was largely shared by the Presbyterian ministers who lived among them. Not enjoying a system of public schools, many communities provided education cooperatively in the elementary grades with the state sharing in these ventures to some degree. The influence of Prsbyterian ministers may be judged by the lament of Presbytery as late as 1842 that three-fourths of all the ministers were withdrawn from full ministerial services to activities in the class room.¹ These efforts in the school-room had their effect upon the soul and life as well as upon the mind.

No Presbytery meeting passed without consideration of the important matter of education, and the thought of Presbytery was not upon the simple matter of a schooling, but rather upon the provision of an education which would instill the basic elements of a faith. It contemplated raising of funds to assist worthy young men for the ministry. It was deeply interested in the development of the Theological Seminary, lately moved to Columbia, South Carolina, and while this seminary was vital to the area, and while Thomas Goulding its founder was often seen in its meetings, our purpose will permit only this reference to it. Oglethorpe University also arose about this time and rendered magnificent service to the church throughout a period of about 30 years under the leader-

1. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 7, 1842.

ship of C. P. Beman and S. K. Talmage,² the latter of whom guided the institution as president for nearly a quarter of a century. Oglethorpe's sons were found later in many pulpits of our area. Not being within our bounds, only this brief mention of Oglethorpe may be made at this time. Church papers were regarded as a form of education and as a necessity for the home of every elder. Repeated endorsements appear approving acceptable papers by name, such as *Watchman of the South*, *Biblical Repertory*, *Charleston Observer*, and *Southern Christian Herald*.³ Religious tracts were distributed for popular use and instruction, and in church schools and classes use was made of *Union Question Books*⁴ and *Brown's Catechism*.⁴ The church tried to care for the spiritual training of its children by Bible classes, by Sabbath School instruction, and by training in the catechisms. In 1838, the Presbytery took this action:

Considering the education of youth and their being early instructed in just principles of religion as one of the most useful means of promoting that influence of the Gospel in our churches, that it be enjoined on Ministers and Sessions of vacant congregations and all heads of families to give diligent and careful attention to the catechising of the children and youth of the several congregations within our bounds, as is required by the constitution of the church. 2nd That it be recommended to ministers and Church sessions to set apart regular times, monthly, quarterly, or semi-annually, at which the children and youth of our congregations shall be examined and instructed in the catechisms of our church.⁵

Nathaniel Pratt and his officers with lofty aspiration undertook to provide advanced training and schooling for young ladies of Roswell and vicinity.⁶ Accordingly there was advertised to open in the year 1845 a female seminary with boarding facilities, providing beyond the common high school subjects such courses as those in music and drawing. Little is known of the progress of this school, but it is here mentioned to indicate the rising desire for the developing of a refined culture.

About the same time that Mr. Pratt opened his school in Roswell, the Rev. J. S. Wilson moved from Lawrenceville to Decatur to take charge of the church there. One of his first steps in the new field of service was to open a school for young women which was named

2. Stacy, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia*, p. 142.

3. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Sept. 15, 1838.

4. Black, *History of Bethany Church*.

5. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Sept. 17, 1838.

6. *Charleston Observer*—May 24, 1845.

the Hannah Moore Institute. It was intended to provide high school opportunity for young women, some of whom came to board in the village to take advantage of the school. During that period Rebecca Latimer came to live in the home of Rev. and Mrs. Wilson while she attended school. The reader may be aware that this Rebecca later married Mr. William H. Felton, and became the first woman ever to hold a seat in the United States Senate.⁷

Mrs. Felton was not the only United States Senator tutored in the school of an early Presbyterian minister. Benjamin H. Hill, according to the record of his son, moved to Meriwether County at the age of 16 where "he had the privilege of being taught by Rev. Mr. Corbin, a graduate of Yale College. His progress under this tutor was very rapid." This was the Rev. Lyman W. Corbin who, along with his school work, did missionary work in nearby counties.⁸

An interesting venture was Gwinnett Institute, and to it we shall give our major consideration, because it reveals interesting aspects of educational endeavor, and existed within our area. It probably grew out of the school established by Rev. John S. Wilson shortly after his settlement near Lawrenceville. Gwinnett Institute was chartered by the legislature in the year 1835⁹ with five ministers and six elders as incorporators and was representative of the entire Presbytery. It was projected as a Manual Labor School where the student might reduce the cost of schooling by work on the farm. Its purpose was

to afford an opportunity for acquiring a thorough education without the necessity for resorting to any other institution. It is the object of the founders of this institution to render it a "finished school"—a school where a young man may make such scientific and classical attainments as shall prepare him for any of the learned professions¹⁰

One of the members of the Board, in referring to the school, made this statement, that "the primary object was the education of pious young men for the Gospel ministry."¹¹ One, obtaining a meager glimpse of the school, might conclude that life must have been somewhat strenuous for the young men. Each morning there was worship at sunrise, which consisted of Scripture and prayer. In summer time, boys were in the fields at six o'clock in the morning

7. Monk, *Life and Work of John S. Wilson*, p. 41.

8. Hill, *Life, Speeches and Writings of Benj. H. Hill*, p. 13.

9. See Acts of Georgia Legislature.

10. *Charleston Observer*—Feb. 21, 1835.

11. *Ibid.*—Aug. 1, 1835.

where they worked for three hours under the supervision of Moses Liddell, the superintendent of the farm. Then they returned to the class room for recitation. Any boy might enter if he were at least twelve years of age, and of good moral character. He must be able to write legibly, to read and to spell, and have a working knowledge of simple arithmetic. The range of the studies projected over a five year period is very interesting. At the risk of being tedious, the course of study is outlined: 1st year: Orthography, Reading, Writing, English Grammar, Geography and History; 2nd year: English Grammar, Geography, Latin Grammar, *Historia Sacra*, *Viri Romae*, Caesar and Algebra; 3rd year: Virgil, Greek Grammar, Cicero's Orations, Greek Reader, Algebra and Geometry; 4th year: Geometry, Greek Testament, *Graeca Minora*, Horace, *Graeca Majora* and Natural Philosophy; 5th year: Natural Philosophy, Astronomy, Chemistry, *Graeca Majora*, Cicero de Oratore or Livy's Mathematics, Logic, Belles Lettres and Evidences of Christianity. "Composition and the delivery of selected or original pieces will constitute a regular and indispensable exercise through the whole course."¹² Reflecting upon the demands of such a course of study, one may wonder if there were no giants in those days. The Board made an appraisal of the school program at the close of the first term and pronounced it satisfactory. The chairman then wrote: "It afforded unequivocal evidence of the practicability of combining study and manual labor. It was satisfactorily demonstrated that the progress of the student instead of being retarded was accelerated."¹³

The original farm was described as containing about 250 acres,¹⁴ and was located about two miles west of Lawrenceville. The first summer's report showed 70 to 80 acres in corn, which was estimated to produce 1600 bushels. The oats were good. Wheat had failed. Some cotton was growing in the fields. Vegetables sufficient for the use of the establishment were produced.¹⁵ The first enrollment showed nearly thirty pupils. Student charges at the school were \$50.00 per year, which included "dieting, washing, tuition and room-rent." They furnished their own bedding, lights, and towels. Payment of \$25.00 was required before the pupil was permitted to recite in classes, and the second payment was

12. *Charleston Observer*—April 29, 1837.

13. *Ibid.*—Aug. 1, 1835.

14. Flanigan, *History of Gwinnett County*, p. 361.

15. *Charleston Observer*—Aug. 1, 1835.

to be made at the close of the school year,¹⁶ but this latter provision was afterwards changed so that payment became due at the start of the second term. The first term was from January to June and the second term from June to November. The vacation period allowed six weeks from November 20 to early January.

The school opened for classes in January, 1835,¹⁷ and continued in operation for nearly ten years.¹⁸ First, there seems to have been a relaxation in severe discipline by reducing the number of hours of labor, and later by making labor optional. Robert McAlpin was chosen as the first president,¹⁹ but resigned after the first year. There were continued financial difficulties. The Board of Trustees was never able to pay for the farm, and was compelled to make an adjustment with the creditors whereby it surrendered ownership of the farm but retained 21½ acres which included the buildings.²⁰ Thus in 1843, when this surrender became effective, all hope of a labor school was abandoned. Rev. James C. Patterson followed Mr. McAlpin in the presidency, and continued through the life of the school.²¹ Richard T. Winn, a former student, wrote at a later date that "the farm was very rocky and some of the boys developed there an aversion to farm work."²² Certain of the elders of Fairview Church took great interest in the school and supported it liberally. In its failure they suffered financial loss.²³ The business affairs of the school were reported settled in 1845,²⁴ when the remaining interest in the school was turned over to Mr. Patterson. Ownership of buildings and land came into the possession of the Craig family after the closing of the school,²⁵ and the materials from the buildings were used in the construction of a residence by members of that family.

The religious life of the school is of interest here. In addition to the period of worship at sunrise mentioned above, there was a similar period in the evening. Each Sabbath the boys were required to attend church in either of the two churches where service might be held.²⁶ At a meeting of Presbytery in 1838, the requirement

16. Ibid.—Feb. 21, 1835.

17. *Charleston Observer*—Aug. 1, 1835.

18. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River (see Apr. 6, 1845).

19. Ibid.—Sept. 7, 1835.

20. Ibid.—Oct. 4, 1843.

21. Ibid.—Sept. 21, 1837.

22. Flanigan, *History of Gwinnett County*, p. 361.

23. Ibid., p. 388.

24. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Apr. 6, 1845.

25. Flanigan, *History of Gwinnett County*, p. 95.

26. *Charleston Observer*—Feb. 21, 1835.

of attendance upon service twice each Sunday was set.²⁷ Though this practice of prayers morning and evening and religious worship twice each Sabbath may seem strange to us, it was also a requirement of the University of Georgia in those early days.²⁸ Then every Sabbath, morning and evening, the boys were required to receive instruction in a Bible Class under the immediate care of the Rector. The instructions consisted of a lecture on a book of the Bible taken in order, with an explanation.²⁹ During the summer of that first year of operation there was a distinct season of religious revival in Lawrenceville. This revival was reflected in the school so that "ten or twelve of the students became hopefully pious," bringing a majority of the students into the number of Christians.³⁰

The very names of most of the students have been lost with the passing years, and only a few are known to the writer. Richard T. Winn was a life-long resident of Lawrenceville, and became a Judge of the Inferior Court in the county. Sketches of some of the earlier citizens were written by him, in which brief references are made to Gwinnett Institute. Another name is that of Albert Shotwell,³¹ who pursued here his initial studies in his preparation for the ministry. From Gwinnett he went to Columbia Seminary. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Flint River and served West Point Church as his first pastorate.³² He filled several pastorates, served for a time as agent of the American Bible Society, and closed his service in the editorship of Presbyterian papers in the midwest.³³ A few other known ministers—Andrew R. Liddell, John C. Humphrey and James McCarter—all of short service, obtained training at Gwinnett Institute.³⁴

The manual labor idea in the schools seems to have received general approval in administrative circles, but in its practical working it was not popular with students and patrons. Wide economic reverses during the years immediately following the establishment of Gwinnett Institute made difficult the raising of funds necessary to place it upon a sound financial basis. The rise of Oglethorpe University at Milledgeville a few years later in a place more accessible

27. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Feb. 28, 1838.

28. Catalog Franklin College (U. of Ga.) 1851-2, p. 19; 1866-7, p. 48.

29. *Charleston Observer*—Feb. 21, 1835.

30. *Ibid.*—Aug. 1, 1835.

31. See *Ministerial Directory*, Albert Shotwell.

32. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 22, 1849.

33. *Ministerial Directory*.

34. See Wilson, *Dead of the Synod of Georgia*, Respective Memorials.

by public conveyance greatly affected Gwinnett Institute. All of these factors hastened the end of a devout dream.

II

Building A Culture



3. REACHING OUT

THE vigorous young Presbytery considered first its own expansion, being aware that the church must always be missionary in its outlook. The Presbytery of Flint River felt, furthermore, that it must expand its activities to preserve its very existence. The great mass of the people was slowly moving westward, and the church was determined to move with it. Among the ministers also was the tendency to move westward. The larger number had entered the area from the northeast. As they were dismissed they moved on into new country—to Alabama, to Florida, and into the Cherokee Country. Here may be seen the urge of the missionary pioneer.

At its initial meeting in 1834, Flint River Presbytery first created its own organization and set its rules of government. Next, it made provision for a Society of Domestic Missions,¹ which society was active with ever increasing influence in the years that followed. Hon. Eugenius A. Nisbet, an elder of the Macon Church and long influential in public affairs in Georgia, was the active secretary of the Society. In this manner he sets forth certain observations concerning the church's fundamental task: "The Western and South-western Counties rapidly filling up with industrious, enterprising and all too irreligious population which will tell upon the destinies of the State. They must be lightened with the leaven of righteousness. Their moral energies must be stirred to action. The ministry of reconciliation must lift up the Gospel sound in the cities, towns,

1. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Mar. 20, 1834.

and upon the mountains and within the valleys of Western Georgia. The prime duty of the Church in this day is to accompany all advances of the human mind with the influence of Christianity. Education upon Christian principles will bring in the Millennium. Christianity is the balance wheel of society. Within limits of Presbytery are many immortal spirits who in a Gospel land hear no Gospel. Also sheep of our fold who have no shepherd, have no altar, no temples, no priest. The organization of Flint River Presbytery seems to have been a divine arrangement to bless the State, and we may not shut our eyes to the truth that it is the depository of immortal interests of untold multitudes who shall in times to come inhabit this part of the State.”²

In its Constitution adopted by the Presbytery, the task of the Board is defined as follows: “It shall be the duty of the Board to ascertain the state of all the feeble and destitute churches in the bounds of the Presbytery, to find out how much one may be able and willing to do in support of the preacher among them, and to afford such aid to the aforesaid churches as the Board may think expedient. It shall be the duty of the Board also to become acquainted with the more destitute places within our bounds, where ministers may be profitably employed and to procure suitable laborers and to send them out to supply the destitute and to form new churches as to them may seem expedient.”³ “Each laborer employed by the Board, if a licentiate, shall receive thirty dollars, and if ordained and married, forty dollars a month, and shall account to the Board for all moneys he may receive while in their employment; and shall report in writing to the President at the close of his labors.”³

The report of the Board of Domestic Missions for the year 1838 shows that it had paid out \$525.00 in the present area of Atlanta Presbytery.⁴ \$346.00 of this amount had been collected by Dr. McDowell, the Assembly’s agent, in the city of Macon. The appropriations were detailed as follows, and as one reads he is not quite sure that he is hearing about our own Presbytery: “To the Church at Franklin in Heard County and to the Church of Ebenezer in Troup County for the services of Rev. Lyman W. Corbin \$200; to Church of Philadelphia in Fayette County for services of Rev. Michael Dickson \$100; to Church at Covington in Newton County for services of Rev. James H. Saye \$50; to Church of Smyrna in De-

2. *Charleston Observer*—Apr. 21, 1838.

3. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Mar. 20, 1834.

4. *Charleston Observer*—Apr. 21, 1838.

Kalb County for services of Rev. M. Dickson \$100; to Churches of Alcovia and Carmel in Gwinnett County for the services of Rev. Thomas Jackson \$75. The Church has been able to give aid to 8 feeble churches and have in their service 4 ministers. . . . The principal difficulty the Committee finds is want of money and suitable men."⁴ One glances at this frail weak effort and feels the heart throb of this great movement which for more than a century has been gaining momentum and contributing to the great Presbytery that now is. Three of these weak churches are still alive, and in the day of this writing are manifesting vigorous signs of life. Five of them served their day and died, one of them to be later revived. Who can estimate the fruitfulness of that meager investment of \$525.00? Who can tell the number of those in white robes who serve the Lord day and night in his temple? Who can judge the strength that the descendants of the fourth and fifth generations are now adding to the living church?

Dr. John S. Wilson after fifty years of service reviewed his early experiences and made the statement that in no year of the first eighteen devoted to this area did he receive in support from the church more than \$300 annually.⁵ In their cries of destitution the Presbytery called for volunteers to visit some one of the churches before the next stated meeting and to hold a sacramental service. When there were insufficient volunteers Presbytery used its authority and required such visits. For a brief period the Committee on Domestic Missions was broken into three sections, centering about the towns of Macon, Columbus and Lawrenceville, so that administration might become more efficient.⁶

Because of the difficulty in discovering men, the Synod was compelled to look for them within its own bounds, to urge its pastor-teachers to direct promising young men among their own students into the Gospel ministry, and to look in faith to the Great Head of the Church for this supply. One would have stood on holy ground could he have watched Presbytery set the seal of its licensure upon young men, place a Bible and a Hymnal in their hands,⁷ offer its prayers, and send them forth commissioned to go into the Cherokee Country or into the newly opening south. They had one firm assurance: that He was with them "always even unto the end of the world." These were pioneers who counted not their lives dear unto themselves.

5. Monk, *Life and Work of John S. Wilson*, Anniversary sermon.

6. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Apr. 1, 1837.

7. Ibid.—Oct. 6, 1843.

CAMP MEETINGS.

One of the interesting characteristics of the period was the emphasis placed upon the Camp-Meeting. The conditions of the day should be reviewed. Pioneers who had settled in the country had been acquiring desirable home sites. Their stakes had been driven down, but their homes were scattered. Their churches were small. They had accumulated little and their annual income was meager. Services were infrequent, because provision could not be made for the support of a minister. These services were held once or twice a month. Churches were often destitute for many months at a time, and sent their appeals up to Presbytery. Presbytery would take action appointing one or two services before the next stated meeting or within the next six months. To meet the situation more helpfully the Presbytery appointed three and four-day meetings. At one of these three-day meetings held in Griffin, a certain Mrs. Mary J. Lanier professed her faith in Christ, and on March 31, 1844 presented for Christian baptism her son, Sidney Clopton.⁸ In some cases it proved practical to invite the membership of distant churches to share these services, and an open space was sought where they could bring wagons and provide temporary shelter. Brush-arbors were erected, and the people prepared to give for the time their entire attention to the cultivation of religion.

John S. Wilson, in his "Necrology," refers to the early action taken by Presbytery in 1825 with reference to these meetings: "WHEREAS the members of our Churches within the bounds of this Presbytery are few, and scattered over a comparatively large surface of country; and WHEREAS, great advantage has arisen to churches from meeting together, in holding Christian communion with each other in the enjoyment of gospel ordinances; it is therefore RESOLVED, That the Presbytery recommend to the brethren and to the Churches under their care, to meet together in as large numbers as may be convenient, at least once a year, on sacramental occasions, and that our ancient custom of fasting, humiliation and prayer, on such occasions, may be revived as far as expedient."⁹ In 1844 the little church of Goshen reported a camp-ground at "Flint Hill."¹⁰

These meetings were generally held in individual churches until about the year 1845, when the Presbytery proposed a division of

8. Sessional Records Griffin Church—Mar. 31, 1844. (This is the poet Sidney Lanier.)

9. Wilson, *Dead of the Synod of Georgia*, p. 39.

10. Sessional Record of Goshen Church—1843.

its churches into groups of from three to five churches that might unite in these camp-meetings.¹¹ The church at Decatur under the leadership of its recently installed pastor, Rev. J. S. Wilson, had already conceived the idea of widening the influence of its summer meeting and had invited the Philadelphia Church to join it in a camp-meeting to be held near Decatur.¹² As a result of this meeting several members were added to the membership of the Philadelphia Church, and also a considerable growth was seen in the Decatur Church that same year. A few members now living remember the old "tabernacle" at Decatur. The Smyrna Church ground was also the place of meeting for its surrounding territory. The following minutes are of record: "Smyrna Church October 27st 1845 A four days meeting previously appointed the Meeting was attended by Brother Pharr Rev. D Ingles & Rev. Jas. Patterson the meeting Commenced Wednesday Night the 23rd of October and progresst until monday morning during which time there was some anxious meetings held. Sabath morning the session convened in the school house Constituted prayer and opened the door of the church for members Came forward Moses Dobbins John Guffin Martha Sims Sarah Ritchards Frances Levingston Martha Hollingsworth Martha Guffin to convers with the Session and was all examined on experimental religion and was all received into Smyrna Church and Bethany Church, . . . Monday morning 9 o'clock session met. . . . Came forward a coulard woman and was examined on experimental Religion and was received." The Griffin minutes show a joint meeting with Friendship Church in 1846.¹³

Rev. W. M. Cunningham reported from LaGrange on October 22, 1845 as follows: "LaGrange Church sustains two annual camp-meetings within two weeks of each other 8 miles west of LaGrange and 12 miles north." At the first of these meetings, which was held the Wednesday before the second Sabbath in September, at Ebenezer Church, there was great discouragement because of the estrangement of two elders. During the season, however, there was a public reconciliation and the entire community was greatly moved, leading to the addition of 28 members to the Presbyterian Church. Two weeks later in the Long Cane neighborhood 20 more members were added."¹⁴

11. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 9, 1844.

12. Sessional Records of Philadelphia Church—July 20, 1844.

13. Sessional Records of Griffin Church—Oct. 4, 1846.

14. *Watchman and Observer*—Dec. 25, 1845.

Concerning the camp-meetings at that period Dr. Wilson writes: "Thousands often assembled at these meetings, and spent usually four or five days in prayer and praise, and preaching and hearing. These occasions furnished thousands an opportunity of learning what Presbyterianism was, who otherwise would never have possessed an intelligent idea of its doctrines or polity. Presbyterians from long distance in the surrounding area came together, and formed a personal acquaintance, which otherwise had never existed. They learned to love each other. They entertained for each other afterwards an undying affection. . . . Well do we remember the closing scenes of many of these holy convocations. When the hour came, what tender farewells were uttered. . . . These meetings were often signally blest by the outpourings of the Divine Spirit and the conversion of multitude of souls. Not infrequently fifty to a hundred souls were brought to confess Christ. Even distant Churches were strengthened and builded up so as soon to be able to sustain pastors."¹⁵

The influence of the camp-meetings can be estimated by noting, during the period 1845-50, the growth in membership of many of the churches, some situated in the country and several in the towns. In several churches there appears a peak in the development. The baptismal record shows many children named for visiting ministers. The interest in and enthusiasm for these camp-meetings waned in most of the churches after a few years. Several of the churches developed their own camp-grounds. All of them except the one at Smyrna Church have long since disappeared. The one at Smyrna was established about the year 1845, and the prevailing opinion is that a camp-meeting has been held there every year since its establishment except for several years during the War Between the States.

15. Wilson, *Dead of the Synod of Georgia*, p. 40.

II

Building A Culture



4. SELF EXAMINATION

THE times were likely to be marked by emotional religious excitement. The revival interest was keen. The people gathered expecting some unusual mark of renewed life. The activities of the churches were limited and the special season offered privileges seldom enjoyed. Often special seasons of grace accompanied them. Interesting is the report that came from the penitentiary at Milledgeville in December, 1834. Services were held there by the local ministers, and during a remarkable experience 50 out of 80 inmates professed conversion. A great change in the entire attitude of the prisoners were reported. They asked for the opportunity to unite with the church, and upon their request the local ministers agreed to the organization of a church in the prison. It was agreed by all that the prisoners should decide upon the denomination, and all would be received into the church organized. By vote the prisoners decided upon the Methodist Church and all were thus received upon the proviso that when any prisoner was released he should be granted a letter to the church of his choice.¹

The unstable conditions of the new settlements and the difficulty members found in adapting themselves to the customs and ideals of church life made this period one marked by many cases of discipline in the several churches:

Of a certain Dr. Russell, it was charged that he acted improperly for that on a certain day in the town of Lawrenceville he was engaged in

1. Minutes of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia—Dec. 9, 1834.

an affray or fight. He rendered satisfaction and received admonition.² Another man was charged with intoxication and profane swearing. He confessed and professed repentance. He was suspended for three months upon probation.³

Rebecca had circulated slanderous reports about Mr. John P. She was given a hearing and found guilty as charged. She refused to apologize and was suspended.⁴

The LaGrange Session made it a practice once a year to sit together and read the entire roll of members, and to consider the degree of faithfulness of each one. Committees of one or two from the Session were appointed to visit members who had neglected their duties as Christians and church members, and to admonish them.⁵

A certain Mr. presented himself with his wife for membership in the Fairview Church. His wife was received. Action upon his case was deferred to a later date because there was a cloud upon his conduct at a previous place of residence. He made confession, and promised good conduct and was received.⁶

Rev. R. T. Marks, a member of the Presbytery of Flint River, was also the publisher of a newspaper. He had written editorials in connection with a political campaign, and had addressed a political meeting. Synod admonished him with this resolution at its meeting in 1840, "That it is the solemn and deliberate opinion of this Synod that it is highly improper for anyone who has been solemnly set apart to the duties of the sacred office to engage actively in party politics, from all conviction that it employs his time, injures his personal piety, and places insurmountable barriers in the way of his usefulness". "That editing political partisan newspapers and addressing political meetings are utterly inconsistent with the sacred office and whenever such things exist, they call for immediate redress on the part of the Presbyteries."⁷

Mr. Nixon was tried for shooting an unruly slave. Extenuating circumstances were set forth. However, the church deemed him worthy of suspension.⁸

The records of the Smyrna Church show a certain Alexander charged with 1st. "batting and shooting for half pints of spirits. 2nd. His having a fight with 3rd. His having used profane language. 4th. His unlawful cohabiting with a loos woman." The witnesses alleged were not members of the church and did not answer citations. After several months of fruitless efforts to proceed to a trial, the Session took the following action: "in as much as most of the members of the

2. Sessional Records of Fairview Church—Aug. 5, 1826.

3. Ibid.—Feb. 11, 1826.

4. Ibid.—Nov. 9, 1834.

5. Sessional Records of LaGrange Church—Oct. 6, 1850.

6. Sessional Records of Fairview Church—Apr. 24, 1825.

7. Minutes of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia—Nov. 30, 1840.

8. Sessional Records of Fairview Church—Apr. 23, 1831.

Session have had conversation with these witnesses and are thereby led to believe Mr. to be guilty in a greater or less degree of the charges alleged against him they feel that in the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed they are impiously required to decide that for the vindication of the honour of Christ and the promotion of the purity & general edification of the church & in hope also of promoting the benefit of the offender himself he be suspended from the privileges of the church until he gives satisfactory evidence of repentance.”⁹

In the Goshen Church a certain Elder named was reported to have struck a certain citizen. The accusation was called to his attention. He made confession and was then admonished. The whole was concluded by a public announcement at the Sabbath worship.¹⁰ Rumors against Mr. Mc. were investigated. What was supposed to have been inebriety was declared to have been “merely temper.” He was admonished.¹¹

Seth Hart was brought to the Session and questioned about his attendance at Theater. He admitted attendance and stated that he felt no wrong in attending the theater, but added that “if it was unpleasant to the members of the church, he would not again attend.”¹²

The old records of this period abound in cases of discipline, and the foregoing are merely illustrative.

The wide use of ardent spirits and the injurious consequences thereof, and the tendencies to accompany celebrations with drunkenness, led the Synod to take the following action in November 1833, “The fourth of July, the anniversary of our Independence as a Nation, is a day dear to Americans; and the important events it is designed to commemorate should never be forgotten by the inhabitants of this highly favored country. In regard to the propriety of observing it as a national Jubilee, there is but one opinion among the members of this body. They all feel that the day should be observed. But while they feel perfectly cordial in the observance of the day, they would respectfully suggest to the churches and the people under their care whether there should be some change in the manner of observing it. We are a Christian people. We profess to acknowledge the hand of God in our Independence and in all our blessings and privileges as a Nation. And the Synods think that in our celebrations the hand of God should be recognized, and our distinctive character as a Christian people should be mani-

9. Sessional Records of Smyrna Church—Jan. 9, 1837.

10. Sessional Records of Goshen Church—1843.

11. Sessional Records of Fairview Church—May 8, 1825.

12. Sessional Records of Macon First Church—June 22, 1839.

fested. Or, in other words, they are decidedly of the opinion that the day, which commemorates so important deliverance and such invaluable privileges and blessings, for which it is acknowledged we are indebted to the Providence and Grace of God, should be a day of National Thanksgiving. Without, therefore, wishing at all to interfere with the civil rights of any individual, or to dictate to their fellow citizens, (as there are members, both male and female, who do not unite in the usual celebrations) they would respectfully recommend to the ministers and congregations under their care, as far as practicable to have divine service publicly performed on that day." (Note: The present November Thanksgiving was not observed at that time.)¹³

There existed a very friendly relation between the representatives of the several denominations. A very long list of Methodist and Baptist ministers of the day could be culled from the minutes of the meetings where they were in attendance as visitors. Presbyterians and Baptist congregations shared the use of buildings at Long Cane, at LaGrange and at Jackson. Methodists and Presbyterians held a joint interest at Fellowship and at Union Chapel. Again and again during Presbytery meetings the two above named denominations tendered the use of their buildings for any service for which they might be desired. At times they were used. The meetings of Presbytery often extended over the Sabbath, and on such occasions the Presbyterian ministers were invited to occupy the pulpits in the sister churches.

Once the young Presbytery had been set off, the leaders began to judge their own task, and the thoughts of their minds were expressed with hopes and some despair:

(speaking of the churches) "they are planted for the most part in desirable situations where a growing population holds out to them the prospect of considerable enlargement and presents a loud demand for active labor."¹⁴

However, "some of the churches are so weak that they are not able to procure the services of a minister more than one or two of the Sabbaths of each month, and then for the want of more cultivation the seed sown is lost and the soil does not yield its increase."

"The fewness of the laborers compared with the extent of the field and the distance between the churches hold out serious impediments to the efficient cooperation and vigorous extension of our efforts."¹⁵

13. Minutes of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia—Nov. 22, 1833.

14. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Spring Narrative 1834.

15. Ibid.—Narrative in Spring Minutes 1835.

An interesting trend with its reaction is seen in the early 40's. The clerk of the Presbytery began to use the term "bishop." He called the roll of the "Bishops" (meaning ministers), then he would call the roll of the Elders (meaning Ruling Elders). The results were then so recorded in the minutes of Presbytery. It may have been regarded at first in lighter vein, but after a year or two, the Presbytery in all seriousness directed that the term "Bishop" be not used, and as a result the clerk returned to accustomed terminology.¹⁶

Hear the alarm of the Presbytery over the economic crisis of 1837.

"The spirit of enterprise and speculation that now exists, not among impenitent men, but among professed Christians, the rapid advances in the prices of personal and real estate, and the profitable transfer of property that have taken place, have introduced a mania for speculation unparalleled in the history of our country, and this mania is not confined to any class or profession of people. It pervades the whole community. Such is the eagerness to become rich that the ordinary means of acquiring property are forsaken—the peaceful fireside is deserted—the Sabbath is desecrated and the family altar neglected."¹⁷

To close this examination of the Presbytery's appraisal of itself, let us imagine ourselves listeners in the meeting as the divines and ruling elders address themselves to these questions: "How often ought a pastor to feel himself bound to visit the families of his pastoral charge? and how often should a congregation expect their pastor to visit them in the course of a year?—and what is the best way of conducting pastoral visits?—and what are the duties of ruling elders in this matter?"¹⁸

16. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 4, 1843.

17. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Apr. 2, 1837.

18. Ibid.—Mar. 31, 1849.

II

Building A Culture



5. THE RAILROADS AND ATLANTA

THE railroads came into this section during this period, bringing all their transforming effects. There was hardly a church in the Presbytery that was not called upon to face a new situation. New towns sprang up. New markets were opened to the settlers. New locations invited new enterprises. New citizens were lured by business hopes. One consequence of the enlarging population was the entering of aggressive spirits to take advantage of new opportunities. New importance was attaching itself to old points, while others lost some of their former interest and importance. Many long habits of life were broken and others adopted in their place. It is not therefore surprising that the entire pattern of the Presbytery of Flint River was altered. Excitement arose in many quarters, and across the country there were quickened pulsations of life.

The period, in consequence, saw new churches organized as the new towns sprang up. As the towns served by the stage-coaches yielded steadily to those along the railroads, so the churches shared the fortunes of the towns. New factories and shops offered employment and invited the youth from the rural areas where their families were too large for the farms upon which they were reared. What church was not affected to a greater or less degree?

The air was charged with excitement and also confusion by reports about railroads. Charters were granted and altered. Construction of roads was begun and then stopped. Routes were planned, and then the roads were rerouted. Men of speculative

minds were endeavoring to predict the future. Others of vision and practical wisdom were planning the future. In those days the Georgia Railroad moved out from Augusta toward the west with its two prongs, one leading to Athens and the other to Madison.¹ It was building its trade area. Northward from Macon, the Macon and Western was moving, soon to become the Central of Georgia. This fact was of special interest to Gen. L. L. Griffin.² It spelled opportunity, and in consequence he purchased about 800 acres of open land where he envisioned a future railroad junction. He laid it off in streets and lots. He assigned particular lots to public buildings and parks. He allotted ground to the churches, one of these going to the Presbyterian Church.³ Thus the city of Griffin was planted in 1840.⁴

Among the early settlers of Griffin was a Presbyterian elder, Dr. James S. Long, and a Congregational minister, Henry L. Deane.⁵ They found five Presbyterians in all, and one other man who was interested. Dr. Long attended presbytery taking a petition to be organized as a church. In answer, Rev. Michael Dickson and Rev. Lyman W. Corbin, assisted by Mr. Deane,⁶ organized those six persons into a church toward the close of the next year after the founding of the city. Report is that this devoted group was permitted to use the warehouse of a friend for services, and the worshipers sat about on boxes and bales while the minister lifted their souls to the throne of grace.⁷ The railroad did not reach Griffin until 1842. The Methodists being in larger numbers were earlier in erecting their church building, and tendered the use of it to the Presbyterians.⁸ This small group of Presbyterians was enthusiastic, and when they were but 19 in number invited the Presbytery to meet in Griffin in 1844. There must have been glowing reports of Griffin spread abroad—of its railroad and of its enterprise—for there were 25 elders who came to attend that meeting, along with the 8 ministers.⁹ The optimism created at Griffin drew new residents. McDonough, Jackson, Fayetteville declined, being nearby towns but off the railroad. We find Presbyterian elders moving in,

1. Acts of the Legislature 1833 and also Dec. 25, 1837.

2. Mitchell, *History of Pike County*, p. 35.

3. Deane, *History of Griffin Church*, p. 4.

4. Mitchell, *History of Pike County*, p. 35.

5. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 8, 1842.

6. Ibid.—Oct. 7, 1841.

7. Deane, *History of Griffin Church*, p. 2.

8. Ibid.

9. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 8, 1844.

to the detriment of other churches. James Espie came from the small group at Monroe. John Lamar came from McDonough. C. W. C. Wright came from Monticello, and Henry Caldwell came from Friendship Church.¹⁰ A progressive town and a vigorous church came into being. The church erected its building in 1848, receiving some, but only meager, help from the Church Extension Board.¹¹ In not many years the church became one of the very few in the Presbytery which unaided supported fully its own pastor.

Also at another point, and that in DeKalb County, the dream of some men of vision was coming to life. A railroad to connect the Chattahoochee and the Tennessee Rivers was projected, and later plans were altered so as to bring the railroad to high ground eight miles beyond the Chattahoochee.¹² By prompt and skillful planning, in the year 1842, this railroad was completed to a point near a little post-office named White Hall, but later named Terminus.¹³ It was one of the great occasions when the Western and Atlantic Railroad was completed from Chattanooga on the Tennessee River to the eight-mile point in DeKalb County. Neither end of this railroad connected with another railroad. In order to place a locomotive on the railroad it was necessary to purchase it, to bring it as far as Madison, to dismantle it, and to haul it on carts to Terminus.¹⁴ The first railroad trip on the new road was made on December 24, 1842, and prominent Georgians and Tennesseans made the journey.¹⁵ Upon this occasion one of the invited guests was Dr. Samuel K. Talmage, President of Oglethorpe University, which was then located at Milledgeville, the capital of the State. Major Cooper thus writes of the arrival at Chattanooga:

The procession formed and marched to a temporary shed located near where the present passenger depot is and were received by the people of that place. Then the procession moved on to the river into a flatboat at the landing, led by Major Mitchell with Major Cooper and Dr. Talmage at its head. Having halted, thanks and prayer to the Almighty God were made by Dr. Talmage. Major Mitchell then presented what he claimed to be a bottle of water from the Atlantic, and one from the River Jordan. These he uncorked, and holding them up in a solemn imposing manner, announced what each contained; That he was about to unite the waters of the Atlantic with those of the Mississippi as the

10. Compare names of Griffin elders with earlier enrollment at Presbytery.

11. Sessional Records of Griffin Church—Sept. 13, 1848.

12. Acts of the Legislature—Dec. 23, 1837.

13. Coulter, *Georgia, a Short History*, p. 260.

14. Cooper, *History of Fulton County*, p. 58 (Pub. in 1934).

15. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

first grand result of this great railroad enterprise. He also said holding up one of the bottles that this was a bottle of water from the river Jordan, provided for the occasion, that it might be signalized and made memorable by the mingling of the waters of the Atlantic and the Mississippi with that of the river Jordan, believing that it would throw a unity of the south and the west, sanctified by the water of Jordan.¹⁶

With the completion of the railroad and the erection of the first buildings at Terminus, John S. Wilson had turned his eyes in that direction. Here we see again the great missionary heart and consecrated vision of that man, for he made this statement in a sermon preached a few years later:

We have labored in this city since its foundation, having, so far as we know, been the first to preach the Gospel, while it was yet known as Terminus, before it was honored with the more dignified name of Marthasville.¹⁷

The railroad to Terminus accomplished what its promoters had anticipated and hoped for. The builders of the Georgia Railroad immediately planned an extension to join the Western and Atlantic at Terminus. The building of this railroad brought a certain car builder¹⁸ named Joel Kelsey to Social Circle.¹⁹ He was an aggressive Presbyterian. He found the Rev. Daniel Ingles, a Presbyterian Minister at Social Circle in charge of the Academy there.²⁰ A little group of seven Presbyterians who had been organized into a church at Monroe in 1839²¹ had been disheartened when their elder James Espie moved to Griffin, and they together with Mr. Ingles and Mr. Kelsey organized a church of ten members to be known as the Central Church of Walton County (also Social Circle).²² Building of the railroad progressed and reached Marthasville in 1845, and under the enthusiasm of this link with the Atlantic seaboard the city adopted a new name. (the name, Atlanta, was given in December 1845).²³

Now let us turn to Mr. Wilson. When called to accept the pastorate of the Decatur Church, he saw its great opportunities and

16. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

The above quotations are from the Memoirs of Mark A. Cooper and are used with permission of the family.

17. Monk, *Life and Work of John S. Wilson*.

18. Cooper, *History of Fulton County*, p. 77.

19. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 4, 1843.

20. Wilson, *Dead of the Synod of Georgia* (Biography Daniel Ingles).

21. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 16, 1839.

22. *Ibid.*—Oct. 4, 1843.

23. Cooper, *History of Fulton County*, p. 62.

resigned his pastorate at Lawrenceville. But his interest in Atlanta continued. A log meeting-house was erected and was used by the different denominations. Upon the completion of this log building, Mr. Wilson inaugurated the worship services for the Presbyterians and was followed in turn by ministers of the other connections.²⁴ Mr. Wilson with patient work rallied a group of Presbyterians, among whom was Joel Kelsey, the car builder and elder of Social Circle, who had moved to Atlanta. Nineteen persons were organized into a church on January 8, 1848.²⁵ They laid plans for the erection of a church building. With much toil and anxiety the church building was completed and dedicated on July 4, 1852 at a cost of about \$4200.²⁶ The church struggled under what seemed an insurmountable load. Mr. William Markham, who was formerly an elder of the McDonough Church but then of Atlanta, presented this appeal to Presbytery in the form of a resolution which was adopted by the body:

Whereas the Church in Atlanta feeling an interest in the cause of Christ's Kingdom and in building up of Presbyterianism at so important a point, felt the great need of a suitable house of worship; and after a severe struggle and years of labor, have succeeded in completing such a house at an expense of over Four Thousand dollars; and having paid more than half of that amount, leaving a balance of little more than Two thousand due for the building of said house; and the members of said church feeling that they have already done all they were able to do, and being desirous of being relieved of so heavy an embarrassment come with the Macedonian cry for help. Be it therefore resolved that each Pastor and stated supply be and hereby is requested to state to their churches, the pecuniary embarrassment of the Presbyterian Church of Atlanta, at such time and in such manner as may be deemed best, before the first of January next; and take up a collection for the benefit of said church.²⁷

There must have been apprehension in the minds of the loyal parishioners of Decatur as they noted the growing interest of their pastor, Dr. Wilson, in the new city of Atlanta. Oglethorpe University had recently recognized his worth in awarding to him an honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.²⁸ One Sunday each month he was giving to Atlanta;²⁹ three Sundays he was at Decatur. Atlanta soon wished two Sundays, but Decatur was reluctant to release

24. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

25. *Century of Christian Life and Service*, p. 3.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

27. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 28, 1853.

him. Accordingly, the Presbytery sent its Stated Clerk, Rev. James C. Patterson, to the congregation at Decatur to intercede for Atlanta in this action:

it was resolved that Rev. J. C. Patterson visit the church at Decatur to confer with them and if possible induce them to relinquish their claims to the pastoral services of Mr. Wilson so far as one sabbath in each month is concerned, that the church in Atlanta may secure one half of his ministerial services during the coming year; And in due time that he inform the church in Atlanta of the object of his visit to the church in Decatur.³⁰

From the above sketch it may be seen that there had been introduced into the Presbytery all those factors which surround the planting of a city. First, the growing city begins to draw members from the smaller outlying and rural churches. Then, in turn the influence of the growing city reaches out. Then, if the city can be enlisted for the cause of Christ, it offers its great resources for the blessing of the area in which it lies. Henceforth we shall watch these forces at play.

STRENGTH OF THE
PRESBYTERY OF ATLANTA
As seen in 1850.

Though the Presbytery of Atlanta was at that time a part of the Presbytery of Flint River, figures are given only for the area of the Presbytery of Atlanta.

Number of Churches	27
Number of Ministers	14
Whole Number of Communicants	1,541
Number of Sunday Schools
Sunday School Enrollment
Total Gifts to Benevolences	\$ 694
Churches Holding Service Each Sabbath	0
Churches added to the Roll in the Period 1834-50	17
Churches Erased from the Roll	9

28. *Ministerial Directory*, John S. Wilson.
29. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 11, 1850.
30. *Ibid.*—Oct. 11, 1850.

III

Prosperity



1. TRANSITION

THE second half of the nineteenth century was ushered in upon a wave of material prosperity. Georgia had become rich, and was justifying its name as the "Empire State of the South." This decade was to prove the end of an era. "In 1860 . . . Georgia raised 30,776,000 bushels of corn, 2,544,000 bushels of wheat, 1,231,000 bushels of oats, 52,507,000 pounds of rice, 919,000 pounds of tobacco, and 701,000 bales of cotton (400 pounds each). She also produced more than a million bushels of sweet potatoes, more than a half million gallons of molasses, almost a million pounds of honey, almost a million and a half pounds of butter. . . . Furthermore, she possessed more than a quarter million horses and mules, 74,000 work oxen, more than 600,000 sheep, more than a million cattle, and swine to the number of almost two and a half million. Such wealth might well have attracted Sherman's tired and hungry hordes."¹ During the decade the annual exports increased from the value of \$7,551,943 in 1850 to \$18,483,030 in 1860. The value of a slave had risen to about \$1,800.² People from other areas moved in as they saw promise and opportunity. Many had come from the North into Georgia, so that the state became known among its neighbors as the "Yankee State of the South."³ One might have expected this decade to show much

1. Coulter, *Georgia, a Short History*, p. 265.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 274.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 283.

progress in our part of the church, but yet, when the record is read, it proves to be merely a period of transition. The total membership of the churches varied little in 1860 from the number in 1850. Why did the church not grow in a period of great material prosperity?

What were the forces at work? The plantation system was rapidly developing. The impression widely prevailed that the land would be exhausted in a few years. Much of it was exhausted because it had been badly abused. Discouraged and restless farmers were selling their holdings to adjoining successful proprietors, thus making the latter's farm lands more extensive. Most of the plantations, furthermore, depended upon slave labor which was always very inefficient, thus tending to deplete the land still more. In consequence this period shows the steady replacement of the white population by Negroes on farm lands. Uniformly over the section the white farm population declined and the slave population increased. The only increase of the white population was seen in the two growing cities of Griffin and Atlanta, and in the gold country.⁴ This period may therefore be appraised rather as one of readjustment than of growth.

Reference was made to the gold country. The discovery of gold had heightened the clamor for the Cherokee lands, and this gold country extended south into the area of the Presbytery of Atlanta as far as Haralson and Carroll Counties. This was the period of the gold rush in California, and its appeal to the public imagination probably lent more interest and excitement to the discovery of gold in Carroll County than it would ordinarily merit. One community which developed upon the crest of the gold rush was called Villa Rica. It was at the first a characteristic rough gold mining village and marked by lawlessness and many excesses. The road from Marietta to Carrollton passed through Villa Rica and also through Powder Springs which was a popular watering place of the day.⁵ Rev. Benjamin Dupre, a Presbyterian minister, lived at Powder Springs,⁶ and in his missionary service preached at Carrollton.⁷ The minutes of the Carrollton Church show that Mr. Dupre held occasional services at Villa Rica as early as 1843. However, there was no organized church at Villa Rica until 1858, when Mr. Dupre

4. See United States Census figures.

5. White, *Collections*, p. 189.

6. Minutes of the General Assembly—1851.

7. Sessional Record of Carrollton Church.

was given authority to act for the Presbytery.⁸ By that time the excitement of the gold days had largely subsided, and a better state of morals prevailed. Gold-mining proved unprofitable, and only insofar as the section turned toward cotton was the economy profitable.

This was still the period when the development of the railroad systems was working transformations. Griffin had sprung out of a field with the opening of the railroad, and the church there was rapidly becoming one of the strong churches of the Presbytery, being one of the few churches with a resident pastor. By 1850, however, the city of Atlanta had outstripped Griffin in population. An interesting transportation system existed at the time. Out of Atlanta, railroads operated to Chattanooga and Augusta to the north and to the east. To the south and west traffic must pass through Griffin. The railroad continued on through Griffin to Macon, but to the southwest passengers must leave the train at Griffin and continue by stage-coach on to LaGrange and West Point. As a result there developed a thriving freight and passenger business by stage out of Griffin, and this in turn maintained a line of communication with points en route—including Friendship neighborhood in Pike County and the Greenville Community of Meriwether County. During the next decade a new railroad was put into operation from East Point to West Point,⁹ resulting in immediate loss of business to Griffin. Communities about Greenville and Friendship churches became isolated, with a corresponding loss of strength to the churches. LaGrange and West Point grew in population, and this gain was reflected in the churches.¹⁰ These trends have been at work ever since, as a study of these churches will show.

The lure of the west also affected population changes during this period. The war with Mexico had been won, and Texas, a new state, was opened to settlement and offered land that was new. The railroads which could bring new settlers in could also take them out. Many persons were inclined to move, and continued moving until they had left the country altogether. Friendship Church in a brief period of seven years dropped in membership from 55 to 12.¹¹ On the other hand along the railroad LaGrange grew from 80 to 119 in membership, and West Point from 43 to 82.¹¹

8. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—June 24, 1858.

9. Jones, *Coweta Chronicles*, p. 98.

10. Statistics of the General Assembly.

11. *Ibid.*—1858.

An interesting episode is that of White Sulphur Springs. Richard T. Marks, in the newspaper business in Columbus, was turned toward the ministry after a successful business experience. Because watering places were popular, Mr. and Mrs. Marks invested some of their financial resources in the hotel at White Sulphur Springs, about eight miles to the south of Greenville, in Meriwether County.¹² They were proprietors of the hotel, and it was from this point that Mr. Marks would go forth to serve the churches, being primarily interested in the work of an evangelist. His interest prompted him to invite the entire Presbytery to hold its sessions as his guest at White Sulphur Springs. Accordingly, Flint River Presbytery met at White Sulphur Springs on April 2, 1856. At this unique meeting, there were 13 ministers and 11 ruling elders representing the churches.¹³

Dr. James Stacy, at whose first meeting of presbytery the invitation of Mr. Marks was presented, and who would remember it vividly, states in his history, "Two objections were raised: One was that we had no church there; the other that it would be an imposition upon the brother to entertain such a body and also their horses, as there was no railroad or public conveyance any where near. To the first, he replied the fact that there was no organization there was the very reason why the Presbytery should go there with the hope of planting one. To the second, he said that it would be no imposition, as he had made a fine crop and had an abundance of provisions for all the Presbytery and their horses; that the guests would not be coming in until May and therefore an abundance of room for all; that it would be a most pleasurable occasion to the Presbytery to have them all under the same roof and sit at the same table; that it would be equally so a pleasure to himself and family to entertain the Presbytery, and furthermore, that so far as the expense was concerned the Lord could easily pay it back to him and more with one good shower of rain upon his fields. The arguments of the Brother prevailed, and Presbytery accepted the invitation."¹⁴

At the close of the session, Presbytery recorded its appreciation thus: "the fact that owing to the peculiar facilities that have been offered us for business and for social intercourse, we regard the present meeting as the most pleasant and fraternal in the history of this body."¹⁵ Dr. Stacy also recalls "After the adjournment two or

12. Court Records of Meriwether County.

13. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Apr. 2, 1856.

14. Stacy, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia*, p. 316.

three of the Brethren remained and held services for several days, which resulted in the organization of a little church consisting of 14 members with two Ruling Elders."¹⁴ Mr. Marks erected a chapel upon his own property and at his own expense, and throughout the remainder of his life preached as regularly as his circumstances would permit. When Mr. Marks disposed of his hotel property, he reserved one half acre for church use.¹⁵ During the war years, the springs became a place of refuge, and the membership grew to be as many as 24. With the close of the war and the death of Mr. Marks the church scattered and the few remaining members were transferred to some nearby church.¹⁶

HAPPENINGS IN ATLANTA

Confusion might properly describe the state of the affairs in the young church at Atlanta. The city itself was still a frontier settlement, though small business and industry were growing up. Irresponsible elements manifested themselves among the population and there were occasional outbreaks of lawlessness. Rev. John S. Wilson from the beginning had guided the destinies of the church there. He had preached in the village before the church existed,¹⁷ and he had been present to help them in their organization.¹⁷ At the first he had provided one Sabbath service each month. He then led in the erection of the first building. July 4, 1852 was a significant Sabbath for the church, for on that day they dedicated their new building. For a few months previous they had been "deprived of public means of grace," and this was therefore a day of encouragement. Dr. Robert C. Smith of the faculty of Oglethorpe University and Rev. Remembrance Chamberlain, who had been associated with Dr. Wilson from their first days in the new country, were present for the occasion. There were three services: Dr. Wilson preached in the morning, Dr. Smith in the afternoon, and Mr. Chamberlain in the evening. At the Communion service in the morning the church rejoiced in the addition of 11 persons by certificate and 3 persons upon profession.¹⁸ New hopes arose in the church.

The completion of this building suggested to some the possibility

15. Court Records of Meriwether County.

16. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 12, 1888.

17. *Century of Christian Life and Service*.

18. *Southern Presbyterian*—Aug. 26, 1852.

of a school, not in the sanctuary reserved for worship, but in what was known as the "lecture room." This was in the basement of the building. Such schools were often private ventures, making use of the church buildings and patronized by the membership and others. Such a school was opened in the First Church building by two ladies who had come from the North, Miss A. L. Wright and Miss E. S. Reid, and was known as the Atlanta Select School. It was maintained until the coming of the war.¹⁹

But what of the services of worship on the Sabbath? Previously we have noted the unwillingness of the Decatur Church to relinquish any more of their pastor's time. Many felt that there should be a service each Sabbath, and were anxious to call Dr. Wilson from Decatur to become pastor of Atlanta Church. There were those who desired a younger man (Dr. Wilson was then 56 years of age).

Many factors influenced the course of action. There was widespread political activity abroad and threats of secession could be heard. People from all sections of the nation, both North and South, had mingled. Industries were being introduced into what had been only an agricultural area. Divergent viewpoints were bound to exist. The constituency of the church was composed of more than the 60 members enrolled at the time. There was a considerable group of Presbyterians who had not cast their lot with the church but who worshiped with its people. The system of renting pews prevailed, and this produced a class of "pew-holders," who might be non-members, but who claimed a voice in affairs.²⁰ Aggressive individualists, not held by any former traditions, played a large part in the life of the growing city with its population increasing during the middle 50's at the rate of 1,000 persons per year. Though there was divergent opinions, wise and experienced leadership might have welded all into one harmonious church. However, when the church made its choice, it selected an enthusiastic young man with but two years as an ordained minister, and most of this time had been spent in the school room.²¹ The result was that lines of cleavage widened, and soon the distressed church called upon Presbytery for help. Twice the Presbytery lent its offices, but in its efforts to be just, it had not always pleased; nor had it healed the sore. In a moment of desperation the church went so far as to

19. Martin, *Atlanta and its Builders*, p. 256. (The school operated from 1855 to 1861.)

20. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Feb. 10, 1858.

21. *Ministerial Directory* (see J. L. King).

overture Synod to transfer it to the Presbytery of Cherokee.²² Wiser counsel fortunately prevailed and the overture was withdrawn. With a sense of pain that seemed almost tragic the Presbytery was led to propose the division of the little group of 130 members into two churches. This proposed division was taken to Synod in protest, where it was freely discussed. Counsel of conciliation was heeded and a happy accord was reached. Synod then adopted this resolution:

Whereas, the pastor and Elders of the church at Atlanta, present at this session, have appeared on the floor of Synod, and with every evidence of sincerity and solemnity retracted every offensive imputation against each other's character as gentlemen, Christians, and officers of the church; and whereas, the said parties have publicly taken each other by the hand, declaring before God and their brethren that they forgive each other for all past offenses, and promise by the grace of God to live in love and peace, and to seek individually to heal every wound in their church caused by recent animosities; therefore:

Resolved, That this Synod with humble and earnest thanksgiving to the Great Head of the Church for his great grace in giving so happy termination to these unpleasant difficulties, commend these brethren to the continuance and increase of that same grace, and pray that they may be able to prove their present sincerity by ever after "Keeping the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace."²³

At the following meeting of Presbytery in Atlanta on February 11, 1858, these resolutions were adopted⁴

Resolved 1st That the prayer of the petitioners requesting a division be granted, and that the signers of the petition for a division be and are hereby constituted into a church and the signers of the paper opposed to a division be constituted into another. Resolved 2nd, That due notice of this division of the church be made public at an early day as practicable, and that each church be directed to meet separately in this house and organize by electing such officers as are necessary to a Presbyterian Church. Resolved 3, That we enjoin an equitable distribution of all the property of the church and in order to accomplish this object, we recommend each branch to select one competent and disinterested man and those two shall elect a third, to whom the claims of the two new organizations shall be fully submitted and who in rendering their award shall be governed by the members and the amount originally contributed by the respective parties, the parties who have removed or are dead being considered common to both and their contributions as common stock. Resolved 4, That, the relative amounts

22. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—Nov. 25, 1854.

23. Ibid.—1857.

due to each party being thus ascertained Presbytery would recommend that they agree among themselves as to which division shall retain the present house of worship at its estimated value; But if this cannot be done, the entire property be put up at public outcry and that the party that retains the property pay to the others, the proportion, awarded by the arbitrators above referred. Resolved 5, The party retaining the building be called the 1st Presbyterian Church of Atlanta and the other, the Second Presbyterian Church, and that any members who are not on the petitions referred to above who may wish to attach themselves to the Second Church, be directed to apply to the session of the 1st Church for letters of dismission. Resolved 6, That the signers of the petition for a division of the church, be directed to meet for organization in this church on next Sabbath at 3 o'clock P.M. Resolved 7, That in the event that either branch, on or before the 1st of April shall neglect or refuse to appoint an arbitrator and to carry out the decision of Presbytery in regard to the division of the property, then the other branch shall be declared the perpetuating church and as such entitled to the whole property of the church. Resolved 8th, That the different branches of the church have the use of the present building alternate weeks, commencing with the division that organizes next Sabbath—the 14th instant.²⁴

Presbytery, on April 1, received the report that the division had been completed, and recognized the two churches as the First and Second Churches respectively.²⁵ “Dr. Rhea reported that the church he represented had adopted as their name “The Central Presbyterian Church of Atlanta” and requested in behalf of the church that this name may be approved and confirmed, which was done.”²⁶ The two churches were thus set up: The Central Church, on February 14th, with 40 members and the First Church, on February 21st, 1858, with 57 members. The annual report submitted a few weeks later showed First Church with 90 members and Central Church with 53. Peace reigned within the two churches. The First Church called the Rev. John S. Wilson of Decatur and continued in the original building. The Central Church employed the services of Rev. John W. Baker,²⁷ who was then teacher in the Georgia Military Academy at Marietta, and met in the City Hall until a building could be erected on Washington Street in 1859. Rev. J. L. Rogers was called and installed pastor, on January 16, 1859.²⁸

24. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Feb. 11, 1858.

25 and 26. *Ibid.*—Apr. 1, 1858.

27. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 19, 1892 (Memorial of Rev. J. L. Rogers).

28. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Jan. 15, 1859.

Along the Georgia Railroad, to the east of Atlanta, the trend of population was from the open country toward the railroad. Business had sprung up near a station known as Conyers Station, and already a group of members of Smyrna Church had clustered there. They asked in a petition to Presbytery to be set up as a separate church. Thus on July 28, 1860, Conyers Church came into being,²⁹ and with the passing of years has outstripped the mother church.

During this period we find the first Ruling Elder ever to attend as a Commissioner to the General Assembly from the area of Atlanta Presbytery. He was Thomas Reese from the West Point Church, in 1855. More than 30 years passed from the first organization in the area until a Ruling Elder represented the section. Lack of sufficient funds and the long distances to be traveled may be sufficient explanation. Mr. Reese attended the General Assembly at Nashville, Tennessee.³⁰

29. *Ibid.*—Oct. 10, 1860.

30. See Minutes of the General Assembly 1855, also List of Commissioners in the Appendix.

III

Material Prosperity



2. SYNODICAL FEMALE COLLEGE (AT GRIFFIN)

THE Church was confronted with the question, "What shall we do toward the education of our daughters?" Existing schools of higher learning were planned largely for young men. Opportunities for young women were few, because co-education was not countenanced. Parents were furthermore reluctant to send their daughters to school at any great distance from home. Under the social practice of the day, great caution was exercised for the protection of young women. On the other hand, there was concern for the broadest training along Christian lines of those who were to be the mothers of the succeeding generation. Out of this concern came the development of the Synodical schools. As soon as the Synod had approved the plan for the "high schools,"¹ various towns contended for the location of these schools within their bounds. In 1850, at Synod meeting it was determined to establish two "high Schools" within the state; one to be located within the bounds of the Presbytery of Hopewell, and the other to be located within Presbytery of Flint River which at that time covered a territory about twice that of the present Presbytery of Atlanta. Two towns desired the school to be established by the Presbytery of Flint River, namely Decatur and Griffin. The activity and promise of the rapidly growing city of Griffin, which was accessible both by

1. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1850.

convenient railroad and stage-coach accommodations, turned sentiment in its favor and led to the withdrawal of its offer by Decatur. Plans were therefore developed for the school at Griffin.²

The first active step was the drafting of a constitution for such schools as the Synod might sponsor. A special committee was appointed for this purpose, which was wisely selected, as follows: the pastors of the two towns where the schools were to be located, Rev. Francis Bowman of Greensboro and Rev. W. J. Keith of Griffin; two men who had practical experience in school direction, Rev. N. A. Pratt of Roswell and Rev. S. K. Talmage of Oglethorpe University; and two ruling elders who were men of affairs, Matthew Robertson of Columbus and A. Alden of Griffin. Dr. Talmage was chosen chairman.³ This constitution was so devised that the Synod might control the schools, and yet be free of financial responsibility for them. The struggle to support Columbia Theological Seminary and Oglethorpe University, and the disappointing experience with Gwinnett Institute⁴ had made the Synod cautious. In return for control of the schools, the church was prepared to insure, along with a Christian atmosphere, a high grade of instruction and administration. It would provide funds as far as the liberality of the people would prompt. It would place the stamp of its approval upon the institution, and would encourage its people to patronize it. The school at Griffin was incorporated under a board of 18 trustees,⁵ representing a wide section of the Presbytery. The title was held by the trustees for the Synod of Georgia, reverting to the original donors if the school should be abandoned by the Synod.⁶ The patronage of the school from the beginning came largely from the area surrounding Griffin. The benefits therefore were also largely local, and as a consequence little financial support came from elsewhere.

In 1851, a site was acquired at the edge of Griffin (now about one block from the center of the city). The building was erected during the following year 1852.⁷ It was of brick, about 100 feet long by 50 feet wide, and was two stories high. The lower floor had a parlor and a large chapel room, which was also used as a primary department. The upper floor had one large study room

2. Ibid.—Nov. 23, 1850.

3. Ibid.—Nov. 23, 1850.

4. See Section II, Chapter 2.

5. See Acts of the General Assembly of Georgia.

6. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—Nov. 25, 1850.

7. Ibid.—Nov. 30, 1852.

equipped with desks and chairs, and four recitation rooms.⁸ No provision was made for dormitory rooms. One of the specifications of Synod was that there should be no dormitory.⁹ It was the plan that all the young ladies should be located in private homes so that all might have the benefit of home training. Common dormitory life was deemed unwholesome.¹⁰ In order to stimulate gifts to the erection of the building, a system of scholarships was arranged whereby a family with daughters might make a capital investment in the erection of the building and be assured of tuition at some later date for its daughters.¹¹ At the first there was a limit of 10 scholarships of \$250 each. Such a scholarship would insure a pupil of tuition for four years, and preference was given to persons more distant from Griffin.¹² Although the building was erected in 1852, as late as 1858 it was still encumbered with a debt which the Synod seemed unable to remove.¹³ This situation may be explained by the fact that the years immediately following the erection of the building were very lean both for farmer and businessman. To this struggle against debt the Synod surrendered and returned the property to the city of Griffin.¹⁴ The city expected to use the building for school purposes, but the needs of the Confederacy prompted its use as a military hospital.¹⁵ Shortly thereafter the building was destroyed by fire.¹⁶

Having secured a building, the Board of Trustees in a press notice sought applications for the presidency.¹⁷ Their attention was called to Carlisle P. B. Martin, a native of New York, but who had taught for some years within the state of Georgia at Mt. Zion Institute near Sparta. He had furthermore pursued some studies in theology, and had been licensed to preach.¹⁸ To widen the usefulness of Mr. Martin, who had become president, he was ordained to the full office of the ministry in October, 1854.¹⁹ Mr. Martin came to the school in 1852 and completed plans for the opening

8. White, *Collections*, p. 634. (A sketch also may be found.)

9. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1852 (Report of Trustees).

10. *Southern Presbyterian*—Dec. 30, 1852 (Advertisement).

11. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—Nov. 24, 1852.

12. *Southern Presbyterian*—Nov. 13, 1851.

13. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—Nov. 22, 1858.

14. *Ibid.*—1870, p. 6.

15 and 16. Stacy, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia*, p. 170.

17. *Southern Presbyterian*—Adv., Jan. 15, 1852.

18. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—Nov. 30, 1852; *Sou. Presbyterian*—Dec. 20, 1852.

19. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Oct. 1854.

of the first session on Monday, January 17, 1853.²⁰ Mr. Martin resigned the presidency after three years of service²¹ and was succeeded at the close of 1855 by the Rev. James C. Patterson, who in turn served as president until the school was abandoned.²²

In the first annual report the name was listed as the "Synodical Female College." The advance announcement showed President Martin as Professor of Ancient Language, Rhetoric, and Mental and Moral Philosophy. An unnamed instructor was to be found for Chemistry, Mechanical Philosophy and Natural Science. Miss Ada E. Humphrey would be instructress in French, Mathematics and English Branches, Miss Jeannette Bethune, Instructress in History, Botany and English Branches. Mr. Hermann Braumiller, Professor of Instrumental and Vocal Music and the German Language. Mrs. Agnes Braumiller, Instructress on Guitar and in the Ornamental Branches. An instructress was yet to be found for the Primary department.²³ There were two terms of 21 weeks each, and the school was divided into three departments: Primary, Middle and College, each department to cover three years. The cost of tuition for the Primary department was \$18 per annum for the first year, \$24 for the second, and \$32 for the third. The Middle department called for a tuition of \$40 annually. Tuition for the College department was the same. A Modern Language called for \$20 annual tuition. Art required also a \$20 annual fee. Latin and Greek were offered. Board was to be had "in good families at the rate of \$10 to \$12 per month."²³

But few records of the school can be found. In addition to the two men who served as president, it was the custom to have at least one additional male member of the faculty, who was assigned the department of physical sciences, including Chemistry and Physics and sometimes Mathematics. The president usually taught the courses in Philosophy and Christian Evidences. Mr. Daniel B. Harvey and Mr. Erstus Link were among the teachers of Science.²⁴ There was usually a department of Music, and among the teachers who presided were Mr. H. Braumiller, Mr. J. C. VanHouten and Mrs. Franciska Link. Other known teachers were Mrs. Jeannette Bethune, Miss Ada Humphrey, Mrs. Agnes Braumiller, Miss Charlotte Preston, Miss Elizabeth Bates and Miss Cordelia

20. *Southern Presbyterian*—Dec. 30, 1852.

21 and 22. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—Nov. 17, 1855.

23. *Southern Presbyterian*—Dec. 30, 1852 (advertisement).

24 and 25. Faculty members were listed in the various advertisements in the *Southern Presbyterian*, 1852-60.

Quiggle.²⁵ The school suffered from continual changes in the faculty. The number on the faculty seems to have risen and fallen according to the financial fortunes of the time.

So difficult was the financial maintenance of this and other Synodical schools that the entire policy of Synod was brought into question in a report in 1862, which is as follows:

The policy of the Synod appears to have been to extend to the Female Colleges under its care only moral influence, which has consisted only in their hearing their annual reports and appeals, and in passing as often a series of resolutions recommending them to the favor of the people . . . unless they are willing to assume pecuniary obligations, and raise the funds necessary to relieve them from their pecuniary embarrassment, their nominal control is a positive detriment to these institutions.

At the same meeting the Synod took steps to relieve itself of further responsibility for the schools, as follows: "Resolved, that the Synod appoint a committee of six, who shall be empowered to remit the entire control of these institutions to the local Board of Trustees to be controlled by them, or transferred to the Presbyteries in whose bounds they were located."²⁶

The resolution paved the way for the return of the school to the City of Griffin. It was in operation up till the time of the outbreak of war, and continued until some time afterwards. It was evidently a victim of war conditions, as is evidenced by the use of the building as a hospital. The Synodical Female College served its constituency for approximately ten years, and then was closed. It left its mark upon the lives of many young women who have now departed, and indirectly upon succeeding generations. The only visible indication of its earlier existence is a stone marker which now stands upon the site of the original building.²⁷ Resting in the nearby cemetery is the body of the president, and portrayed upon the monument above is the open Bible.

26. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1862.

27. Location on the east side of South 6th Street and one-half block south of U. S. Highway 41 (E. Taylor St.).

STRENGTH OF THE
PRESBYTERY OF ATLANTA

As seen in 1860

Though the Presbytery of Atlanta was at that time
a part of the Presbytery of Flint River, figures are
given only for the area of the Presbytery of Atlanta.

Number of Churches	29
Number of Ministers	17
Whole Number of Communicants	1,576
Number of Sunday Schools	7
Sunday School Enrollment	420
Total Gifts to Benevolences	\$1,154
Churches Holding Services Each Sabbath	2
Churches Added to the Roll in the Period 1850-60	3
Churches Erased from the Roll	1

IV

War



1. THE WAR RAGES

OUR people entered the year 1860 with hopes high. Young industries were becoming vigorous. What we now refer to as the "ante bellum days" were ascending to a peak. There was present a social order possessing romance. Those were days of gracious living. New wealth was being created, and Rev. Andrew Peden reported in April "greatly increased contributions to the treasury of the Lord and the demand for larger and better church buildings."¹ On the other hand signs of weakness were apparent in the social fabric. The slave population had been steadily increasing while at the same time the white population was decreasing. By the year 1860 in the West Point Church this condition had so far progressed that the report to Presbytery showed 82 members, 41 of whom were slaves.² It will be understood, however, that this was an extreme example. In those days also the air was charged with uncertainty. The cries of the Abolitionists were becoming more insistent. They were heard in the halls of Congress, and they were also heard in the councils of the church. People from the various sections of the country were mingling in the new city of Atlanta, and the conscience of the people was being awakened as to the matter of slavery. Moreover, the structure of the new industrial life was not being built upon slavery. The minds of the people were greatly disturbed as though some impending crisis was near at hand. Threats of secession were

1. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Spring 1860.

2. Sessional Records of the West Point Church.

heard from time to time. The recent election of Lincoln in November seemed to make secession inevitable. One era seemed to be ending, and people were asking, What is to follow?

Suddenly, there came the news of the act of Secession in South Carolina on December 20, 1860. It reached Atlanta late the next day, and Saturday, the twenty-second of December, was set for an all-day celebration. Salutes were fired in the morning, and the day closed with a great torch-light parade, and the whole climaxed at night by the burning of Lincoln in effigy.³ Shots were fired at Ft. Sumter in April, and an assault was made upon Fort Pulaski at Savannah and upon the arsenal at Augusta. Excitement and adventure were filling the minds of youths, drawing young men and boys into the armed services. War had come in earnest, but it would be some years before the marching armies would tread the territory of the Presbytery of Atlanta. Her sons would be called. Her funds were needed. Her people were urged to produce upon their farms, both for food and for clothing. But of special interest to us is the fact that the young industrial city of Atlanta was showing great activity. It was in the hill country away from the seaboard, and away from any navigable waterway. It was therefore selected as a manufacturing center for the needs of the Confederacy. For a few years there was a war boom and a period of business prosperity. But citizens were not allowed to forget the havoc and blight of war. The young men continued to march off to the ranks. The daily press carried the lists of casualties. Hospitals were set up from place to place as the needs required.

In the meantime the church pursued its activities. The great breach in the country had brought a breach in the church. North and South were separated in church as well as in state. A convention was called in Atlanta in August, which led to the erection at Augusta in December of a new General Assembly of the Confederate States of America.⁴ In Atlanta anxious people gathered in groups for prayer-meetings which were held upon an interdenominational basis from church to church.⁵ Christian literature was gathered and distributed in camp and hospital. Wounded soldiers were brought into Atlanta for hospitalization. Sympathetic women tendered their services to dress wounds and to prepare food. Services of worship drew care-laden people to the pews. Christian schools

3. Paul Miller, *Atlanta*, p. 15.

4. See Section IV, Chapter 2.

5. *Daily Intelligencer*—May 23, 1862; Stacy, *History Presbyterian Church*, p. 324.

were conducted. In the lecture room of the Central Church, which was on the basement floor, the Rev. James Greer conducted his school for boys during the week⁶ and preached on Sabbaths at Bethany Church and at other points.⁷ Once a year on the first Monday in January the worshipers at Central Church came to make arrangement for the rental of their pews for the ensuing year.⁸ As late as the spring of 1864, the Presbytery deplores "the fact that the spirit of speculation and worldly gain prevails to so great a degree that so many of our communities are carried away with it as with a flood."⁹ The absence of so large a number of the male members from the churches was a great handicap in their operations. During these trying years Dr. Wilson was sent to the meeting of the General Assembly at Charlotte, and there he was chosen to serve as Moderator.¹⁰

The years, however, sped rapidly, and by the spring of 1864 the Federal army was poised at Chattanooga with its eye upon Atlanta. Thenceforward until the close of the conflict, destruction was to appear upon every hand, and almost the entire area of the present Presbytery of Atlanta was destined to lay prostrate. A quarter of a century would be needed for the barest recovery. Marietta was the gateway to the Presbytery. The moving army followed the route of the Western and Atlantic. They destroyed the town of Dalton as they marched, and so effective was this destruction that when the Barry family was received into the First Church of Atlanta in 1866, they could bring no church letters because the church building was destroyed, the organization was nearly extinct, and there was no pastor or ruling elder.¹¹ At Marietta was the Georgia Military Academy, and among its teachers was the Rev. J. W. Baker, who had also served as the supply pastor of the Central Church of Atlanta.¹² Once Marietta fell, the army completely destroyed the Military Academy and fanned out on the north side of the Chattahoochee River. To the west, Villa Rica felt the destructive force of the war, and then Carrollton. In the former, the church records were destroyed.¹³ In the latter the soldiers set fire to the store buildings in the center of town, and then stood with arms in position

6. *Daily Intelligencer*—Jan. 16, 1863.

7. Sessional Record of Bethany Church.

8. *Daily Intelligencer*—Jan. 16, 1863.

9. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Spring 1864.

10. Minutes of the General Assembly—1864.

11. Sessional Records of the Atlanta First Church—1866.

12. *Ministerial Directory* (see J. W. Baker).

13. Candler, *Historical Sketch of Villa Rica Church*.

to prevent the extinguishing of the flames.¹⁴ To the east, Roswell fell victim, and then Lawrenceville. At Roswell the church building was occupied by the invading forces and used as a hospital. The economy of the town was destroyed. Only the devoted efforts of friends saved the Communion Service for the church. The history of the church records that "Dr. Pratt, foreseeing danger, sent it in a barrel of oats to the home of the mill superintendent, Olnier Eldredge, who in turn had it secretly passed to Miss Fannie Whitmire. The latter shrewdly and courageously preserved it and was later awarded by the church a silver cup in recognition and appreciation of her devoted service."¹⁵ The church preserves as one of its treasures a checker-board on the inside of a cabinet door, which is a relic of the occupation. The entire area of Gwinnett County was overrun, but the churches reported no damage. The foraging soldiers impoverished the country of all food, stock, wagons and movable goods.

For a time, the Chattahoochee River was a barrier. All males in Atlanta were registered and equipped with arms, and it is reported that the Home Guard, consisting of nearly 10,000 men between the ages of 16 and 65, guarded the crossing of the river. A crossing, however, was forced and soon the enemy forces were spread out from Decatur to Jonesboro. Widespread evacuation took place wherever people could find a refuge. When surrender appeared to be inevitable, a two days truce was granted for final evacuation. People were taken in wagons to a point known as "Rough and Ready" (near Forest Park), and from thence transported to a camp near Dawson, Georgia. During the month of August the cannon-ading was often furious. So fierce was the bombardment, and so numerous the fires kindled that each householder was required to keep in readiness a ladder and two buckets of water for instant use.¹⁶ The fires were used as targets by the enemy, thus preventing the fire-fighters from extinguishing them. Influences were brought to bear that saved some of the public buildings in the shelling of the city. It appears that the Roman Catholic priest used his intercession with General Sherman, who was himself a nominal Roman Catholic, to spare the churches in the vicinity of his church, thus saving from damage the Central Presbyterian Church, along with the Methodist, Baptist, Episcopal and Roman Catholic churches.¹⁷

14. Cheney, *History of Carroll County*.

15. Potter, *History of Roswell Church*.

16. Miller, *Atlanta*.

17. See Monument on City Hall grounds, Atlanta.

This heavy attack resulted in the final surrender of the city in September.

The movements of the ministers is of interest. Rev. W. C. Smith of Lawrenceville, who taught there and served as pastor of the Fairview Church, left the South, being a Northern sympathizer, and concerning him the Presbytery of Flint River reported to Synod "that it had stricken from the roll the name of Rev. W. C. Smith, he having been known to entertain sentiments hostile to the Southern Confederacy, and having gone over to the enemy."¹⁸ Rev. James L. Rogers, feeling a sense of responsibility for the three of his wife's nieces whom they had adopted, resigned the pastorate of the Central Church and moved to south Alabama for the duration of the war.¹⁹ Messrs. Cunningham²⁰ and Mickle²¹ saw some service among the men in the armed forces. The two Atlanta ministers were compelled to flee the city with the coming of the enemy forces. Rev. R. Q. Mallard returned to his former home in Walthourville. Dr. Wilson escaped to the south, and then by a circuitous route reached South Carolina. His manuscripts and library were shipped by freight car to South Carolina for safe-keeping. Unfortunately they were intercepted by enemy forces and all were burned. Among these papers were numerous historical sketches from which he as historiographer was to produce a history of Presbyterianism in the area.²² Dr. Wilson's son, a physician of Atlanta, was shot down on the street of the city while ministering to the wounded.²² Mr. Mallard was sought out in his place of refuge, arrested and imprisoned. The minutes of the Presbytery record the incident as follows: "About the middle of December last when General Sherman made his descent upon the Seaboard of Georgia, Bro. Mallard, who had retired, after the fall of Atlanta, to his old home in Walthourville, Liberty County, was captured at his residence and carried a prisoner to Savannah where he was lodged in the common receptacle for prisoners, with his fellow captives. The Ladies of the city, however, ascertained the fact, visited him from day to day, and vied with each other in supplying his wants, and using every means to promote his personal comfort. They even sent a deputation to General Sherman, praying for release of our Broth-

18. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1863.

19. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 19, 1892 (memorial to J. L. Rogers).

20. Ibid.—Apr. 7, 1870 (memorial to W. M. Cunningham).

21. *Ministerial Directory*, R. A. Mickle.

22. *Monk, Life and Work of John S. Wilson*.

er, but received the haughty reply that 'God sent his rain upon the just and unjust and so must Federal wrath be visited upon all offenders, without respect of persons.' They subsequently succeeded in effecting his parole, and by last advices, he was allowed the liberty of the city, and permitted to reside in the family of Dr. Axson. There is also reasonable prospect that our esteemed Brother will soon be exchanged and restored to the church and to the bosom of his afflicted family, though his loss in worldly goods has been extremely heavy, including a select and valuable library."²³ A son of Rev. J. E. DuBose was killed on July 22 in the battle about Atlanta.²⁴

Now back to our city of Atlanta. After the capture and destruction of everything that might be of use in the prosecution of war, Gen. Sherman determined upon the destruction of the city before his memorable march to the sea. The torch was applied to all parts of the city, on November 14, with terrible devastation. Only about 400 out of 3800 buildings were left standing within the city, and a possible 100 out of 500 buildings in the outskirts.²⁵ Leaving the smoking ashes, the soldiers moved on. Covington, McDonough and Jackson were on the route of march. The communities about Grif-fin, Fellowship, Philadelphia, Smyrna, and Bethany churches escaped with minor losses after a period of dread anxiety. The blight upon the countryside was exceeded only by the destitution in the city. Typhoid became prevalent in many cities. Confederate currency was valueless. Property had been confiscated. Supplies of all sorts were meager. The plight of the area was desperate. A bewildered population began to move back into the city of Atlanta in December. Shanties were built of brick and salvaged boards. Discarded army tents were put to use. Old freight cars became dwelling houses, and scraps of tin roofing were fashioned into crude shelters. The winter was one of dire suffering. Barter and trade was a common method of business. Dr. Mallard, after his release from imprisonment, returned to Atlanta to resume his work at Central Church and remained for about a year. Dr. Wilson returned to the First Church where he remained till the time of his death.

Throughout the Presbytery, though subject to hard usage, most of the church buildings were soon restored for the purpose of worship. The Timber Ridge building was burned in Kilpatrick's

23. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Mar. 29, 1865.

24. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 7, 1896 (memorial Jno. E. Dubose).

25. Miller, *Atlanta*.

raid. The LaGrange Church was deprived of the use of its building when it was commandeered for hospital purposes. During that time the Baptist neighbors tendered the use of their building for alternate Sabbaths.²⁷ The Presbyterian building was refurnished after the war and served for a place of worship for many years. The Decatur church building was taken over for the storage of military supplies, and later returned. The scars of the wagon wheels and hubs remained in the brick at the corner of the church building for many years.²⁹ The Female Seminary building at Griffin³⁰ and the Roswell Church building housed hospitals for a period.³¹ The First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta was struck by a shell and demanded extensive repairs.³² The Basement of Central Church was used as a slaughter house.³³ Four churches of the Presbytery retained their ministers and a continuity of services through this trying period: namely, LaGrange, Newnan, Greenville and White Sulphur. The remarkable recovery of the churches is indicated by an item in the daily press of 1866, which records that the Union Sunday School of Decatur celebrated thirty-five years of continuous operation, except for "three-months interruption in 1864."³⁴ During this period of confusion, many members disappeared from the records.

By the year 1866, there was sufficient recovery in Atlanta to renew plans for schooling. In the building scarcity, the First Presbyterian Church lent the use of its basement for school purposes. The Atlanta Female Institute and College of Music under the guidance of Mrs. J. W. Ballard opened in the fall of 1866. To assist her she brought Madame Van Den Corput and her daughter Mlle. Van Den Corput, and Miss Leila Cowart. The school continued there for six years.³⁵

Peace was made and reconstruction days followed and left scars even deeper than those of war days. As the cities and towns rose from the ashes, so also builders began to rebuild Zion, and the shepherds began to gather the scattered sheep.

27. Smith, *History of Troup County*, p. 159.

28. Candler, *History of Decatur Church*.

29. Statement of Chas. D. McKinney.

30. See Section III, Chapter 2.

31. Potter, *History of Roswell Church*.

32. Stacy, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia*, p. 57.

33. Statement of John Ashley Jones.

34. *Atlanta Weekly Intelligencer*—June 16, 1866.

35. Martin, *Atlanta and Its Builders*, p. 260.

IV

War



2. THE ATLANTA CONVENTION

WHEN we remember that the War Between the States broke out in April, 1861, we may imagine the intensity of feeling which would exist in May. This tension which had been rising for a number of years reached new heights as hostilities began. It was the lot of the General Assembly of the Old School to meet in the city of Philadelphia in May while this first heat of passion was high. Many representatives from the seceding states refrained from attendance upon the sessions. A few felt that, though their respective governments were at war, there were many fields of endeavor which they as members of the Presbyterian Church shared, and therefore a fellowship of Christian service might be maintained. As the sessions proceeded, it became apparent that the representatives were not willing to confine themselves to matters held in common. There were presented for somewhat bitter debate the "Spring Resolutions,"¹ which with a few amendments were passed. These resolutions declared in general that the Christian position required loyalty to the Federal Government, and implied the unchurching of any who supported any other government. Though this course might have been construed by well meaning persons as an effort to bind the federal union by an action of the church, it became, in reality, the course that rent the church in two. The representatives from the Confederate states returned to their homes with broken hearts and bitterness of spirit. They felt themselves excluded from

1. Minutes of the General Assembly, U.S.A.—May, 1861.

the fellowship of their Northern brethren, and upon their return home they found an effort upon the part of many to attach some stigma to them for attending the Assembly at all.² The general reaction in the South was spontaneous and widespread. The call in press and in church circles was for secession. Public letters appeared in the church papers, and men lifted their voices in church courts.³ Petitions were circulated and meetings of presbyteries were called.⁴ Presbytery after Presbytery renounced the authority of the General Assembly, and clamor was heard for the erection of a new assembly in the Confederate States. The *Richmond Enquirer* called for a preparatory convention in Richmond, on July 24.⁵ Orange Presbytery called for a new Assembly meeting on December 4 in Augusta.⁶ Charlotte, Greensboro and Knoxville had also been suggested as places at which a preparatory convention might be held. New Orleans, where the voice of the noted Dr. B. M. Palmer was influential, opposed a convention as being without authority in the Presbyterian Church. The Presbytery of Memphis, under the leadership of Drs. J. H. Gray and J. N. Waddell, passed the following:

Resolved that we suggest to all the Presbyteries to call a special meeting to consider the subject (i.e. setting up a new assembly) and to appoint representatives to a convention to meet in the First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta, Ga., on Thursday before the third Sabbath in August, 1861, to consult upon various important matters, especially our benevolent operations.⁷

Dr. John S. Wilson wrote to the *Southern Presbyterian* commending the city of Atlanta as the meeting place, stating that "Atlanta is the most central town or city in the Confederacy"; adding that "the summer temperature is moderate" and referred to its "salubrity, pure air and pure water."⁸ Interest developed in certain quarters and led to the appointment of delegates by respective presbyteries to meet in Atlanta on August 15.

The Presbytery of Flint River in preparation for the convention held a meeting on August 7 in Griffin, and adopted the following resolution, which is printed in full as revealing the temper of the day:

2. *Southern Presbyterian*—June 22, 1861.
3. *Ibid.* (See various issues for June and July.)
4. *Richmond Enquirer*—June, 1861.
5. *Richmond Enquirer*—June 1861.
6. Minutes of Orange Presbytery—June 1861.
7. *Southern Presbyterian*—June 29, 1861.
8. *Ibid.*—July 6, 1861.

Whereas the people of eleven states of the late United States of America have by solemn enactment, dissolved their connection with the said Union, for reasons that we approve and sustain; and have instituted a separate and independent government, known as the Confederate States of America, to which we acknowledge our allegiance to be due and to none other; and, whereas, the General Assembly of the Old School Presbyterian Church which met in Philadelphia in May last, did by its action in adopting the Resolutions offered by Dr Spring, touching the state of the country, virtually require that portion of the church within the said Confederate States, to repudiate, disown, and deny their fealty to the Confederate Government, in that the said Assembly enacted, 1st That they are under obligations to promote and perpetuate, as far as in them lies, the integrity of the United States. And 2nd That it is their duty to strengthen, uphold and encourage the Federal Government in the exercise of all its functions, Now, we hold such requirement to be unconstitutional and anti-Christian, since it is an attempt to lord it over our consciences. And since it assumes to decide a great political question, thereby entrenching upon the province of the State; and because, moreover, it establishes a new test or term of Communion in the church, which is alone the high prerogative of the Lord of the conscience and Head of the Church, and furthermore, because, it requires of us, the Ministers, Elders and private members of the Presbyterian Church in these Confederate States, to support and sustain a power which is at this moment waging a most wicked and unholy war of subjugation upon us, such compliance would be treason of a most superlative character. Be it Therefore, resolved, 1st That, we the Ministers and Elders of Flint River Presbytery have assembled and, Representing the church within our bounds, do hereby solemnly condemn and denounce the action of said General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Resolved 2nd That in the fear of God and in view of our accountability, at His holy bar, we do hereby renounce the ecclesiastical supervision and authority of said Assembly, and declare our connection therewith annulled and dissolved. Resolved 3rd That as a Presbytery we deem it proper to express our approbation of the project of organizing a General Assembly of our Church, in the Confederate States, to meet in the city of Augusta, Georgia, in the month of December 1861. Resolved 4th That in view of the fact that a convention has been proposed as a preparatory measure for the formation of a General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, we will appoint delegates to said convention to meet in the 1st Presbyterian Church in the city of Atlanta on the 15th instant, or whenever or wherever said convention shall meet, to consult, deliberate, and vote on such matters as may come before said convention—the design of which is to suggest and propose a course of action which shall secure harmony among the Presbyteries in the formation of a Southern General Assembly. Resolved, That the number of

delegates to the convention be the same as of Commissioners to the General Assembly, viz, One Minister and one Elder.⁹

"Presbytery proceeded to elect delegates to the Convention, when, Dr. Wilson of Atlanta and W. H. Cooper, elder of LaGrange Church, were chosen principal delegates, and Rev. J. L. Rogers of Atlanta and the Honorable John Kiddoo of Cuthbert Church were duly chosen alternates."⁹

Accordingly, on Thursday, August 15, 1861, "A Convention of Delegates from various Presbyteries in the Confederate States of America" met in the First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta at 3 P.M. Dr. J. S. Wilson, pastor at Atlanta, was called temporarily to the chair, and Rev. Henry R. Raymond, pastor and teacher at Marion, Alabama, was elected Temporary Secretary. These selections were later made permanent. Credentials were received and the Convention constituted. In all, there were 24 delegates: one from Tennessee, one from Mississippi, four from Alabama, 10 from South Carolina, and eight from Georgia. Three were pastors of influential churches, four were teachers, one was an editor, one was an evangelist, one an assistant pastor, and three served groups of churches. Eleven were ruling elders, among whom was Chancellor Job Johnstone of the University of South Carolina. The editor of the *North Carolina Presbyterian* suggested disappointment at the small number present at the meeting. This may have been due to distance, for most of the delegates were from Georgia and South Carolina. It may also be explained by the fact that the Convention possessed no authority, so a few might be entrusted to act for all, if conclusions could not be made binding. In some parts of the church there was opposition to a convention, though not to secession. Doubtless, there would be unusual caution in some border sections. The small group of delegates (only 12 Presbyteries out of 45 were represented) were mindful of the responsibility that was theirs. They were greatly helped by the discussions of the church press, and they were aware of varying viewpoints in different Synods. They discharged their responsibility so wisely as to gain in the church at large united support for their decisions. Ten Presbyterian ministers and elders were recorded as visitors, along with three Methodist brethren.¹⁰

The Convention proceeded with decorum and Christian restraint. It was opened with a half hour of devotion. Credentials

9. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Aug. 7, 1861.

10. Minutes of the Convention—Aug. 15-17, 1861.

were carefully examined. The afternoon was spent in consideration of the purpose of the meeting and the methods of procedure, and in determining the area within which their discussions should be confined. The morning and afternoon sessions of Friday were given over to an "interlocutory meeting" to weigh the principal matters with which the Convention was concerned. A committee of 12 delegates was chosen and charged with the responsibility of drafting a report for the Convention. Throughout the day they listened, asked questions, and took part in discussions. It was appropriate that Dr. Wilson, the eldest minister present, should preside over the sessions. The Convention was moved by the words of Dr. Petrie, who came from Montgomery where the Confederacy had come into being. Rev. A. A. Porter of Columbia, and editor of the *Southern Presbyterian* brought to the Convention a wide knowledge of the church. Dr. J. B. Adger of Columbia Seminary brought to the Convention wise judgment gained as a teacher of Ecclesiastical History and Church Polity. They discussed the future of the Foreign Mission work which at that time included work among the Indians in the west. Dr. J. Leighton Wilson, the Secretary, was present. They discussed the effects of renouncing the jurisdiction of the General Assembly. What would be the effect upon the integrity of the ind-Church, and the continuance of the Synods? They considered the establishment of a new Assembly, its time and place, and the nec-vidual church organizations, the integrity of the Standards of the essary steps leading up to it. After this free discussion of Friday, the special committee was left with the duty of drafting a report for submission and adoption on Saturday.¹⁰

On Saturday morning the report was submitted and approved, and preparations were made for its printing and distribution. The completed report reviewed the action of the General Assembly at Philadelphia, which included the Spring Resolutions, and protested it. The report declared that the Convention had no power to legislate, and set forth that its actions were merely advisory, that only action by Presbyteries could provide for a new Assembly. It called upon Presbyteries to withdraw from the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, to declare their allegiance to the Standards of the Church, to elect commissioners to form a new Assembly in Augusta on December 4, to confirm their unity with their sister Presbyteries and their loyalty to the Synod, and to seal this relationship by submitting their records to Synod. The Convention took emergency action to provide for sup-

port of the Foreign Mission work, to provide for a salary for Dr. J. L. Wilson, the Secretary, and to send a commission to the Indians.¹⁰

How well this Convention performed its task may be judged by the effectiveness with which the new Assembly was organized in Augusta on December 4. Copies of the Minutes of the Convention are still preserved. The hospitality of the First and Central Churches and their pastors, Drs. Wilson and Rogers, had been extended to the Convention, and appreciation was expressed.

10. Minutes of the Convention—August 15-17, 1861.

STRENGTH OF THE PRESBYTERY OF ATLANTA

As seen in 1867

Number of Churches	29
Number of Ministers	15
Whole Number of Communicants	1,407
Number of Sabbath Schools	8
Sabbath School Enrollment	496
Total Gifts to Benevolence	\$1,282
Churches Holding Services Each Sabbath	3
Churches Added to the Roll in the Period 1860-67	1
Churches Erased from the Roll	1

V

Rebuilding



1. SETTING UP OF THE PRESBYTERY OF ATLANTA

GEORGIA had suffered destruction from the war more than any other Southern State and Atlanta had suffered more than any other Georgia city. Could there be any hope for a section so utterly devastated? Ashes, charred timbers, twisted tin, and heaps of tumbled brick marked most of the place where thriving Atlanta had been. Bridges were burned and rails had been taken up and twisted. Smaller towns also were ravaged. Much of the live stock had been carried off and consumed. Movable property was in large part gone. Most securities were worthless. After the dreadful winter of 1864-5 and the cessation of hostilities, resolute citizens began to return to their homes. In the city of Atlanta, by the close of 1866, the population numbered about 20,000.¹ There was growing assurance that a center of industry again could be established. There was a confidence that the production of cotton on the farms could again provide a livelihood. As a result, the railroads were immediately placed in operation and rescued from bankruptcy.² With the horses and mules that had been hidden from the enemy forces, plows were again put into the fields. The speed of recovery within Atlanta was amazing. This vision that drove men to action in the secular world was matched by determination within the church. The Presbytery of Flint River had become too widely spread out, and the need for

1. Wilson, *Atlanta as It Is*, pp. 9, 10.

2. Coulter, *Georgia, a Short History*, p. 351.

concentration of effort in the reconstruction of Atlanta was seen. Consequently at a meeting of the Synod of Georgia in Savannah during November, 1866, the following action was taken: "That the Presbytery of Flint River be divided into two presbyteries by a line commencing on the Chattahoochee River at the corner of Troup and Harris counties, and running thence on the most direct lines to the Ocmulgee River where the Northern line of Bibb County touches said river,—That the Northern Presbytery receive the name of Atlanta, and the Southern Presbytery shall be called the Presbytery of Macon.

"That the Presbytery of Atlanta shall consist of all the Presbyterian Churches within the bounds above specified belonging to the late Flint River Presbytery, and the following ministers, to wit: John S. Wilson, D.D., John Jones, W. J. Keith, A. G. Peden, W. M. Cunningham, D.D., Robert Logan, James Stacy, H. C. Carter, R. T. Marks, T. F. Montgomery, and J. L. Rogers, and that the first meeting be held in the Presbyterian Church in Newnan on Wednesday evening before the first Sabbath in April next, and be opened by the Moderator of the late Flint River Presbytery, or in case of his absence, by the oldest minister present who shall preside until another moderator is elected."³

Pursuant to these instructions, the meeting was held on Wednesday night, April 3 at 7 o'clock at Newnan. Rev. James Stacy, the host pastor, was present, as were also his elder, W. P. Nimmons, and elder James Brown from the White Oak church also served by Mr. Stacy. Dr. W. M. Cunningham had come up from La-Grange, bringing his elder, Daniel McMillan. Mr. Joseph N. Boyd joined them at Hogansville. From Atlanta, Dr. John S. Wilson of the First Church had come down accompanied by his elder, V. Thompson, and Moses Cole from the Central Church. There was also present Rev. H. C. Carter who after 40 years had come back to visit scenes of his early missionary labors and to say farewell to his fellow-presbyters. Mr. Carter had been a member of Columbia Seminary's first class of students in Lexington. Rev. Robert Logan had come from McDonough.⁴ This group of 11 men, persuaded of the future of industrial Atlanta, and confident of the ability of the rural constituency to produce cotton and to live off the land, set their faces to a great task.

3. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—Nov. 1866.

4. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta (manuscript copy, p. 1).

MAP OF THE PRESBYTERY OF ATLANTA
at the time of its establishment in 1867.



Each of the churches enrolled at the time are indicated.

They were encouraged by the coming of seven additional representatives on the second day. The course of their thinking was revealed as the sessions continued. New ministers were received into the Presbytery to share in the work. Rev. R. K. Porter came to Central Church, Atlanta, Rev. M. D. Wood to Decatur, and Rev. Henry Quigg to Bethany and Smyrna churches.⁵ Rev. James Wilson and Rev. R. C. Ketchum came to teach and to do mission service, the former at Fairview and the latter at Villa Rica. Elder William Dimmock of Carrollton was encouraged to give his efforts to the rural Sunday School movement under the auspices of the Sunday School Union. Interest in work among Negroes was manifested in the plans for a church in Atlanta, sponsored by the First Church of that city. Young Jacob Clarke Grow of Carrollton was received as a candidate for the ministry, and given the blessing of Presbytery.⁶

Two programs of work were deemed fundamental. A Committee on Missions was created and charged with the care of destitute churches and the extension of the church into new areas. Dr. W. M. Cunningham was made chairman of the committee, and to him was given this pitiful list of destitute churches: Long Cane, West Point, Greenville, Brainerd, Friendship, Carrollton, Villa Rica, Fairview, Goshen, Alcovia, McDonough and Fellowship. The situation was so critical that the General Assembly ordered that each minister spend two Sabbaths in destitute places.⁷ He was charged to "hold sacramental meetings with the churches, and if interest would warrant, to protract them and also to take up a collection," and then at the following meeting of Presbytery to make a report upon his diligence.⁸ A Committee on Education with Dr. J. S. Wilson, chairman, was erected with the object of assisting young men in their preparation for the ministry. Ways and means were to be devised, and to each of the two candidates of Presbytery, Thomas J. Evans and W. W. Brimm, was allotted \$300 that he might pursue his studies.

A splendid spirit of Christian fellowship was manifested in the welcome accorded to visiting ministers of the Methodist and Baptist churches. The session was prolonged from Wednesday evening to Saturday afternoon, and was marked by daily devotion and preaching services. One must remember the isolation of ministers at that

5. Ibid., p. 14.

6. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta (manuscript copy), p. 20.

7. Minutes of the General Assembly—1866, p. 16.

8. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta, p. 21.

time and the dearth of opportunities for Christian fellowship. There was a hunger to hear the preaching and interpretation of the Gospel, and Presbytery provided an occasion where the need could be met. Before adjournment of the meeting and after all business was concluded it was recorded that on Saturday afternoon "the Presbytery spent a pleasant season in Devotional Exercises."⁹

9. Ibid., p. 25.

V

Rebuilding



2. OGLETHORPE IN ATLANTA

BRIEF reference was made to the Manual Labor schools.¹ One such school was established about the year 1835 at Midway, Georgia, near Milledgeville, and then later became Oglethorpe University. Detailed consideration of this effort at Milledgeville is beyond the scope of this volume. For approximately twenty-five years Oglethorpe provided a Christian education for young men—for three years under the presidency of Rev. Carlisle P. Beman, and for twenty-two years under Rev. Samuel K. Talmage. During that period there were 317 graduates, of whom nearly one-fourth became ministers of the Gospel. "Upon her roll also stands a number of college professors, and a host of teachers, physicians, attorneys, and men of distinction. To her also belongs the honor of furnishing the Poet Laureate of Georgia, Hon. Sidney C. Lanier, who went out of her halls in 1860."² One of the graduates active among the ministers of the Presbytery of Atlanta writes thus, "but the crowning glory of the Institution was the frequent outpourings of the Spirit, and precious seasons of grace. Year after year these seasons returned with almost unvarying constancy, thus in an eminent degree betokening the Divine favor."²

The emphasis upon religion was counted of prime importance. One who had weighed the results appraised them as follows: "So much religion produced amazing results in the lives of both students

1. See Section II, Chapter 2.

2. Stacy, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia*, pp. 139-40.

and faculty. By far the great majority of the students yielded to this pious atmosphere and came away from Oglethorpe with Christian ideals and principles stamped firmly upon them, if not professed Christians. As noted above, nearly a fourth of the graduates entered the ministry or other religious work; and three professors—Crawford, Lane, and Woodrow—who joined the faculty as laymen were caught up by the spiritual fervor at the University and were ordained.”³

The progress of the War brought the work of the school to a close. The young men went from its halls at the call of their country and left them vacant. Discouraging efforts to reopen after the end of the war led to a decision to remove the school to Atlanta. The State capital had already been removed, and Atlanta was full of promise. Atlanta citizens expressed the hope that Oglethorpe might be brought there. Dr. Wm. Cunningham of LaGrange was induced to accept the presidency and was ready to reestablish the school.⁴ Mr. L. P. Grant and Mr. E. Y. Clarke had assumed leadership among the citizens, and together they offered to raise the sum of \$40,000. The city government had given a ten-acre tract of land known as the “Fair Ground.” In due time the money was subscribed and Mayor Ezzard reported for the Finance Committee that they believed the subscriptions good.⁵

The first session of Oglethorpe in Atlanta opened on October 4, 1870,⁶ and during the year there were about 120 students enrolled in the various departments.⁷ Unfortunately, Dr. Cunningham had died earlier in the year,⁸ and the Trustees had turned to Dr. David Wills, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Macon. Dr. Wills accepted the call, and continued as president throughout the short life of the school, and assisted also at the First Church of Atlanta.^{8a} An able faculty was secured, consisting of Gustavus J. Orr, Donald Fraser, Benjamin T. Hunter, W. LeConte Stevens, and John A. Richardson, thus assuring an adequate curriculum.⁹ After a time, the Neal House,¹⁰ which stood upon the present site of the City Hall, was acquired for the housing of the University. It was the announced purpose of Dr. Cunningham to establish a first-rate col-

3. Tankersley, *College Life at Old Oglethorpe*, p. 69 (Univ. of Ga. Press, 1951).

5. Stacy, *History of Presbyterian Church*, pp. 126-7.

6 and 7. p. 129.

8. Ministerial Directory 8a. Wilson, *Atlanta as It Is*, p. 35.

9. Tankersley, *op. cit.*, p. 131ff.

10. Statement of John Ashley Jones.

lege, but the enthusiasm of the trustees and the widening vision of the supporters led to the addition of other departments. The establishment of a high school was the first additional venture. Then followed a law school, then a department of business and commerce, and plans were developing for the addition of a medical department. However, those who were widening the field of service were not as wise in providing the financial support. The income from tuition fees was entirely inadequate. Candidates for the Christian Ministry of every denomination received tuition free of charge.¹¹ Little direct support from churches and from interested donors could be obtained. It was necessary to use capital funds for the payment of the teachers. Soon the school became financially insolvent, and was closed.¹²

The quality of the educational work was very high, and it is to be regretted that the school was compelled to close its doors. There were but two graduating classes in Atlanta—those of 1871 and 1872.¹³ Nineteen young men went forth in the two years. Five of them became ministers of the Gospel, and one, Joseph M. Brown, became governor of the state of Georgia.

Many claims against the assets of the school were presented. There were those for unpaid salaries of the members of the faculty. There were adjustments to be made on property obligations. Heirs of former benefactors brought their claims to the Synod. The adjustment of these claims and the freeing of the remaining funds took many years. At length in the year 1898, there was a balance of \$3,115.60 released to the Synod of Georgia. By action of the Synod, those funds were turned over to the Donald Fraser School at Decatur. Thus was written the last item in the illustrious record of Oglethorpe University, only a few years before initial steps were taken to erect again an Oglethorpe University at Atlanta.¹⁴

11. Atlanta City Directory—1872, p. 140.

12. Stacy, *History of Presbyterian Church*, p. 129.

13. Stacy, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia*, p. 150.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 135.

V

Rebuilding



3. YEARS OF DIFFICULTY

THE years that followed the organization of the new Presbytery were years of difficulty and poverty for most of the people. Cash reserves were gone. Wealth that was invested in slaves had vanished with emancipation. During Sherman's "march through Georgia" the people had been robbed of the movable things of value which could not be hidden. Large plantations lay idle, and many antebellum mansions were abandoned. People struggled hard for the barest existence. Some were compelled to leave the plantations for the towns and cities to establish themselves anew. Others left the cities to return to their former country communities to wrest an existence from the soil. During this movement of peoples, the Jackson, Forsyth, Zebulon and Brainerd churches all disappeared. Other churches had no shepherd, except as the stronger churches lent their ministers for a week or two in the summer.¹ Rev. John Jones was urged to yield the pastorate of the Griffin Church to become Evangelist for the Presbytery, and to help in the salvage of the destitute churches.² He had been in the work only about three years when the nation faced the financial panic of 1873, and the Presbytery, because of insufficient funds, found that it could no longer afford the services of the Evangelist.³

1. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—May 5, 1867.

2. Ibid.—Oct. 1, 1870.

3. Ibid.—Oct. 3, 1873.

The years of poverty were also years of debased civil government, described as the "carpet bag" days. The people seemed to struggle in vain to be released from the heel of the conqueror. Many corrupt and greedy men had come into office. At the first, legislators met in Atlanta for convenience, but they liked it so well that they moved the capital to Atlanta in 1868. Taxation was unbearably heavy, and the money raised was wastefully used. Military control of government prevailed intermittently until 1877. One good aspect of this new government, however, was the establishment of the public school system. To direct this system, Governor Smith called from the chair of mathematics in Oglethorpe University Gustavus John Orr, who because of his wise leadership over a period of about fifteen years, became known as the "father of the common schools of Georgia."⁴

Emancipation wrought great changes in the status of the Negroes. To them freedom meant release from all restriction, even freedom from the necessity for work. Promises passing from mouth to mouth gave them hope that they might dispossess the whites and occupy their homes. Lawlessness among them was widespread, and marked by much insolence. Former Christian masters continued their concern for those who had been their slaves. Churches still opened their doors, but the new situation meant freedom from their former churches. In Atlanta, the Presbytery sought to meet their spiritual needs by the promotion of a separate church for Negroes, known as the Colored Church of Atlanta and organized in 1867. This church was placed under the oversight of Dr. Wilson of the First Church of Atlanta.⁵ Connection with the Southern Presbyterian Church was distasteful to them, and they were at their own request transferred to Knox Presbytery under the Freedmen's Bureau of the Northern Presbyterian Church.⁶ A second effort was made in Coweta County, when the White Oak Church opened its doors to a large number of Negro people. These Negroes clamored for a separate organization, and as a result the Mt. Sinai Church was set up in 1875.⁷ This church followed the same course as did the church in Atlanta and sought affiliation with the Northern branch of the church. Separated from the oversight of the churches nearby, both of the above churches were short-lived. Though often express-

4. Tankersley, *College Life at Old Oglethorpe*, p. 134.

5. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 6, 1867.

6. Ibid.—Oct. 1, 1869.

7. Ibid.—Oct. 1, 1875.

ing its concern for its Negro neighbors,⁸ the Presbytery accomplished little in the way of effective service to them.

In the countryside, while poverty prevailed, there were the means for a meager existence. Ample food could be provided, and, by simple living, a happy life could be assured. As a result, nearly all of the rural churches survived the period of hardship, and Philadelphia, Smyrna and Bethany churches even experienced a genuine prosperity. Ministers such as Henry Quigg, J. L. Rogers, and J. L. King, gave themselves almost entirely to rural work, and it would be difficult to estimate the far-reaching influence of their ministry, for out of the fruit of their efforts came many vigorous lay leaders to take active part in building up churches in newer sections of growing Atlanta.

After the war there was the breaking up of the large plantations. Emancipated slaves tended to leave the soil and congregate in the towns. Commissaries gave way to town stores. Plantation owners, suffering great financial loss because of the war and being abandoned by labor to work the crops, were compelled in turn to abandon the farms and seek new employment in the towns. The towns, as a result of these trends, became more important and drew increasing populations. From Presbyterians there came the demand for a church, and in several towns successively, where the church had been previously abandoned, there were new organizations, namely, Thomaston (1871), Covington (1877), and Jackson (1887). The Presbyterians also entered four new towns, namely, Jonesboro (1879), Mountville (1887), Tallapoosa (1888) and Palmetto (1890). Growth was usually slow, yet nearly every one of the town churches survived the reconstruction period and was at its end stronger than at the beginning. The ministry of the Rev. James Stacy of Newnan spanned the entire reconstruction period. Concerning the state of the church, the minutes of Presbytery declared in 1879, "the outlook of Presbyterianism in the Presbytery is not very encouraging."⁹

The Sunday School movement may not be ignored. At the outset of this period Sabbath Schools were maintained in the towns, while but few existed in the rural areas. As late as 1873 there were only nine Sabbath Schools reported in the entire Presbytery.¹⁰ William Dimmock, an elder of the Carrollton Church, became greatly in-

8. *Ibid.*—Oct. 2, 1868.

9. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta (manuscript copy), p. 491.

10. *Ibid.*—Apr. 12, 1873.

terested in this movement, and under the Sunday School Union he dedicated his life to the establishment of Sunday Schools of such denomination as might be decided in the particular communities. In connection with his work, he was first licensed as an exhorter,¹¹ and later ordained to the full ministry.¹² Many Sunday Schools of every denomination in this part of Georgia owe their origin to his efforts and enthusiasm. By the year 1880, the Presbytery reported 21 Sabbath Schools.¹³ Frequently, such schools developed into churches. Through the medium of these new Sunday Schools there were received, into the Presbytery of Atlanta, churches at Bowenville in Carroll County (1875), Timber Ridge in Henry County (1880), and Flat Rock in Henry County (1884). Mr. Dimmock died in 1880 and was followed by his son, Thomas W. Dimmock, in the work of the Union.¹⁴ Mr. W. P. Hemphill, an elder of the Griffin Church, also became interested in rural Sunday School work. He later entered the ministry and served as rural evangelist.¹⁵

It was also in this period that Donald Fraser came to Decatur Church. He had been a member of the faculty of Oglethorpe University in Atlanta,¹⁶ and upon the closing of the University returned to the pastorate, being called to Decatur. Here he regarded the entire county as his parish. He was ever watchful for the gathering of a constituency in an outlying community. Wherever he could find a possible group interested in a Presbyterian church, he encouraged it. As a result, he had the joy of being present at and participating in the organization of Stone Mountain Church (1873), Lithonia (1875), Salem (1875), and Midway (1876).¹⁷ This leadership in Decatur developed the church's interest in the establishment of new churches, which continued long after Dr. Fraser's death. The Presbytery noted with great satisfaction Dr. Fraser's work, and because it was unable to call a presbytery's evangelist, it appealed to Dr. Fraser to become a Temporary Evangelist for a period of six months,¹⁸ and to give two Sabbaths each month to the work. Presbytery then directed that various ministers supply the Decatur Church in his absence.

11. *Ibid.*—Apr. 8, 1870.

12. *Ibid.*—Apr. 13, 1872.

13. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 16, 1880.

14. Statement of Thos. W. Dimmock to author.

15. Deane, *History of Griffin Church*, p. 15.

16. Tankersley, *College Life at Old Oglethorpe*, p. 132.

17. Minutes of Atlanta Presbytery (see said dates).

18. *Ibid.*—Aug. 30, 1879.

Special mention is made of two men whose life work ended during this period. Nathaniel A. Pratt was originally from Connecticut, and had received his preparation for the ministry at Yale University and Princeton Seminary. After a brief ministry in the North, he had heard the call to pioneer service, and at the age of 31 moved to Darien, Ga. Here he married Miss Catherine King, and entered intimate association with a family whose fortunes would be shared by him throughout the remainder of his days. With the opening of the Cherokee Country members of the King family left the unhealthy surroundings of Liberty County for industrial opportunity along the Chattahoochee River. They laid the foundations of Roswell, erected a mill, brought in workers, and then sent for Mr. Pratt to become their spiritual leader. Here Mr. Pratt served from 1842 till his death, first in Hopewell Presbytery, then in Flint River, and then in Cherokee with the changing boundary lines. It was a period of 37 years, in which Mr. Pratt led his congregation in worship twice each Sabbath, taught them the way of life and inspired the grace of liberality. He also taught their school, and opened the hospitality of his home to students who lived at a distance. Until the outbreak of the war, Roswell was a successful community, where the business leaders were also interested in the character of the people, and who took their places in the life of the church. Mr. Pratt (now become Dr. Pratt) was the guiding spirit for these years in a small community which placed the church at its center. He was teacher and counsellor for old and young, and lent his influence also upon the frontier. His last years were spent amid war and war's destruction, ministering in faithfulness to the feeble remnant of his once thriving church. He gave an active mind, a friendly personality, and a consecrated life to the ministry of the Kingdom.

William M. Cunningham also gave an active life to the service of the Presbytery. Born in Tennessee, trained at Princeton, he moved to LaGrange in 1841 after an earlier ministry of five years. He went to a congregation scattered over an area 20 miles in length and without railroads. He traveled for the most part astride a horse, and maintained pastoral oversight and personal ties with all his people for over 25 years. He was a faithful and acceptable preacher. He directed wholesome discipline among a frontier people. He served his Presbytery well, and for years guided its committee of Domestic Missions. During his ministry the church building at LaGrange was erected, and Presbyterianism in Troup County owes

much to this pioneer leadership. At the close of his life he was called to build again Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, but passed away before the first classes could assemble. In the LaGrange cemetery is a marker over his resting place.

Though the churches of Presbytery were gaining in strength, they were still very weak—judged by the measure of our modern day. As late as 1881 the only churches of the Presbytery which were able to provide for their people a full program of services were the First, Central, Third and Fourth Churches in Atlanta and the Grif-fin Church.¹⁹ The need for help from the stronger churches for the weaker ones was clearly seen, and the Presbytery felt the urgency of the need. The Domestic Missions movement was revived, and Presbytery engaged to become its Evangelist the Rev. J. E. Du-Bose,²⁰ who had been the first pastor of the First Church of Atlanta.²¹ He entered upon his work in 1884, and developed a department of Presbytery's work which, under a series of successors, has continued till the present day. A period of recovery was being completed. The Spring meeting of Presbytery in 1889 showed remarkable signs of new vitality. At this meeting there were 14 ministers in attendance, while 30 churches were represented by elders.²² With the opening of the year 1890, Presbytery was ready for a new era of expansion.

19. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 16, 1881.

20. Ibid.—Oct. 12, 1883.

21. *A Century of Christian Life and Service*, p. 4.

22. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 19, 1889.

V

Rebuilding



4. EXPANDING ATLANTA

ATTENTION turns at this point to the new city of Atlanta rising phoenix-like from its ashes. Sherman in 1864 left the city destroyed. The people spent the following winter in intense suffering, exposure and destitution. Yet with the coming of spring all was new activity. Resourceful citizens began to rebuild. Ministers had returned to their pulpits. Railroad construction, being deemed essential, was renewed, and the promoters were confident of early profits. Movement to and from Atlanta by railroad had thus been made easy; therefore the position of the city and its new appointments attracted the Constitutional Convention of 1867. So well did this convention like the city of Atlanta that it made it the permanent capital of the State in 1868. The early days of this reconstruction government were marked by unbelievable corruption⁴ "A vast system of plunder was worked out. . . . Fictitious jobs were created for members of the legislature and for their select kin, and the State railroad paid their salaries. Politicians got themselves made conductors of the trains to fatten on the cash fares paid by the passengers. The road was even used to haul Negroes free of charge from Chattanooga to vote in Atlanta elections. A few investigations were ordered under Bullock, but the committees could never find any corruption, blotted out as it was by liquors, cigars, and other entertainment given these committeemen."¹ Everywhere was wasteful extravagance. The

1. Coulter, *Georgia, a Short History*, p. 375.

only compensation was found in the fact that a large part of the money looted from the people was spent in Atlanta and vicinity, thus contributing to its rebuilding. In their despair and deprivation many people found their only recourse in their faith. One commenting on that time, said, "Religion gained in the troublous times of Reconstruction, for it afforded a solace and a refuge to people who see little to look forward to on this earth."²

By the year 1868 the population of the city had reached 25,000.³ Many sober minded people assumed a philosophical attitude toward defeat. The war was over and they would forget it as soon as possible. There were possibilities in their city, and the development of industry should be sought. A voice was lifted by Henry W. Grady calling the people to a new industrialism. Towns and cities should be built, mines developed and factories constructed. Many leaders in Atlanta held the same opinion. They were men of initiative and energy who had for years dreamed of a great future city, and the very devastation wrought had awakened a united urge to rebuild. They also invited Northern capital to share with them in the enterprise. Thus Atlanta began a new period of expansion which was destined to continue for many years to come.

The growing city offered continued invitation to the church to enter new areas. The first of the churches to grasp the opportunity was the one in Decatur. That town had suffered less than Atlanta from the war. A few miles north of Atlanta, near the Rock Spring, a community was growing up. It was not far from the Atlanta and Richmond Air Line Railroad which was being constructed northward from Atlanta. Presbyterians from Gwinnett County had moved toward Atlanta, and already a group of them had affiliated with the Decatur Church.⁴ Special services had been held in their neighborhood, at which ten persons were added to the church.⁵ These and others petitioned Presbytery for an organization. Rev. M. D. Wood of the Decatur Church, acting for Presbytery, organized the Rock Spring Church with 31 members in 1870, and continued to preach to them.⁶ Daniel Johnson was the first elder to represent the church at Presbytery.⁷

In early 1873, Presbyterianism suffered a severe shock in the

2. *Ibid.*, p. 359.

3. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 11, 1868.

4. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 2, 1869.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*—Apr. 7, 1871.

death of the Rev. John S. Wilson, D.D., then pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta.⁸ As a young school teacher, John Wilson with his young bride had moved into the New Country as a pioneer missionary. He had served successively as pastor of the Fairview Church, the Decatur Church, and the First Church of Atlanta. He also served as Evangelist for the Presbytery. He had taken a leading part in every educational venture of his presbytery and synod. Twelve times he was honored as Moderator by his Presbytery, twice by his Synod, and once by the General Assembly.⁹ He was the presiding officer of the convention which planned the First General Assembly at Augusta.¹⁰ Nine times he attended the General Assembly as Commissioner. His judgment was sought by the Presbytery on matters of importance, and his leadership guided the activities of many important committees. Probably no single individual exercised a greater influence in shaping the development of Presbyterianism in this area. After a full life of 77 years he departed from the scene of his consecrated labors. The influence of his labors bore fruit after his going, for within the year, after a period of vacancy, and just after the installation of his successor, a revival was experienced in the First Church of Atlanta, at which there were 80 conversions, 50 of whom were added to its membership.¹¹

Presbytery deemed Atlanta an inviting field, and placed within the city a young missionary licentiate of Decatur Church,¹² Mr. W. W. Brimm, who had been a law student and who was a veteran of the war.¹³ Two churches, which had suffered much from the war, Central Church at its present location, and First Church at the site of the present Federal Reserve Bank, served the population at the time. That population was building up toward the northwest, and in this section the First Church established "Wilson's Chapel" on the south side of Jones Avenue near Haynes St.¹⁴ Virgil Norcross, a candidate from the First Church and studying theology under Dr. Wilson, was placed in charge of this mission.¹⁵ It developed in strength and brought members to the roll of the First Church. Thirty-nine of these were organized in 1874 into the Third

8. *Ministerial Directory*, John S. Wilson.

9. In the year 1864.

10. See Section IV, Chapter 2.

11. Reed, *History of Atlanta, Ga.*, p. 390.

12. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—May 6, 1866.

13. *Ministerial Directory* (see W. W. Brimm).

14. Atlanta City Directory—1876.

15. Reed, *History of Atlanta*, p. 390.

Church,¹⁶ and the church location was removed to the south side of Baker, between Marietta and Luckie, in 1876.¹⁷ Mr. T. D. Latimer, a young veteran from South Carolina was ordained the first pastor.¹⁸

In this same period, when the Decatur Church was sponsoring the Rock Spring Church and the First Church was developing its mission, the Central Church began a survey of the city to discover the section it regarded as most needy of religious opportunity. A committee of the church decided upon a location on Hunter St. near Moore St. It purchased a property and erected a chapel even before any religious work had been begun.¹⁹ This chapel was completed and dedicated on July 18, 1875.²⁰ To it came Mr. William Dabney,²¹ a member of Central Church²² and a war veteran, who had just completed his studies at Union Theological Seminary. The Hunter Street Church was organized in 1876 with 41 members, and Mr. Dabney was ordained the first pastor.²³ This church faced many difficulties, and when the building was destroyed by fire,²⁴ it was never rebuilt. The church was dissolved in 1879.

During those years of mission outlook within the city, the Negro population was not altogether overlooked. Presbytery was distressed at its inability to serve. The report to Presbytery in 1869 carries this paragraph: "Although our colored population has to a large extent left us, yet a portion of them in some of our churches still adhere to us and to them the Gospel is preached in services especially conducted for their benefit."²⁶ In 1870, one church reported a colored membership of 18 "characterized by a good degree of consistency of life and morals."²⁷ The same church conducted a Sabbath School for colored persons, with a membership of about 125.²⁸ Shortly thereafter there came a petition for the organization of a church. As a result, Zion Presbyterian Church was organized

16. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 9, 1874.

17. Atlanta Directory—1881; Reed, *History of Atlanta*, p. 393.

18. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 3, 1875.

19. Atlanta City Directory—1878.

20. *Atlanta Constitution*—July 20, 1875.

21. Atlanta City Directory—1878.

22. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 23, 1867.

23. *Ibid.*—June 7, 1876.

24. Brockman, Sketch of Druid Hills Church.

25. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—April 26, 1879.

26. *Ibid.*—Oct. 2, 1869.

27. *Ibid.*—Apr. 8, 1870.

28. *Ibid.*—Apr. 8, 1870.

in 1879.²⁹ A young minister with limited preparation, Rev. Allen A. Jones, was taken under the direction of the Presbytery, although not actually received into membership.³⁰ For several years he gave leadership to the work. An inadequate room was used for worship services until 1881, when a lot was purchased at 157 East Harris St. for \$600,³¹ and a small building erected. Mr. Jones was followed by Rev. John R. Harris, who remained for several years.³² Rev. William H. Sheppard, later of African mission note, was ordained by Atlanta Presbytery in 1888 to lead this work.³³ The church, never strong at any time, was dissolved in 1894.³⁴

Enthusiasm of Presbyterians in Atlanta led to the invitation to the General Assembly to hold its meeting in the city in 1882. The meeting was held in the newly erected edifice of the First Presbyterian Church. Shortly after this meeting of the Assembly both the First and Central Churches became vacant, and to the First Church came Dr. E. H. Barnett and to the Central Church Dr. G. B. Strickler. These two men had much in common. Both were Virginians. Both had given several years of service in the armies of the Confederate States. Both had attended Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. Both were men of impressive personal appearance. They came to Atlanta within a few weeks of one another, and after about 15 years departed within a few weeks of each other, Dr. Strickler going to the faculty of the Seminary where he received his own training, and Dr. Barnett going home to his Father. They were men of great mind who loved their people and were beloved of them in turn. They were able administrators and were also active in the larger affairs of the church. The influence of these men together shaped the course of Presbyterianism in Atlanta. They by their example led their flocks in holy living. They ever called their people to participation in Christ's work in the world. They gave wise and directing counsel to the Presbytery, and turned its thoughts to the extension of the Kingdom.

The friendship of these two ministers, both before and after coming to Atlanta, did much to bring unity and joint activity in Presbyterian work both in the city of Atlanta and in the Presbytery.³⁵ Both were interested in developing activity among young

29. *Ibid.*—Apr. 16, 1880.

30. *Ibid.*—Aug. 29, 1879.

31. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 14, 1882.

32. *Ibid.*—May 15, 1883.

33. *Ibid.*—June 24, 1888.

34. *Ibid.*—Oct. 13, 1894.

35. Statement of Mr. C. D. Montgomery.

men of their churches. Prayer-meetings and associations gathered young men for worship and religious activities. A continuous development of outposts followed, and from among the young men came recruits for the Gospel ministry.

The dissolution of the Hunter Street Church left without a Presbyterian center that section to the east of Atlanta. Attention was given by the First Church to that section and the Fourth Presbyterian Church was organized in 1883 on Chamberlain Street at Jackson.³⁶ Most of the members came from existing Presbyterian Churches. A building was erected at once, and Rev. Nathan Bachman, who had temporarily supplied the First Church,³⁷ served the Fourth Church for the first six months.³⁸ Rev. Z. B. Graves was the first pastor. The original building still stands, but after the removal of the Fourth Church to a new location, became the church home of a Negro congregation.

The First Church then turned to a new residential section which had sprung up about West End. Mr. G. B. McGaughey, an elder of the First Church, established and directed an afternoon Union Sunday School on Lee St.³⁹ The Methodists withdrew to organize the Park Street Church, but the Sunday School was continued in Culberson's Hall at Lee and Gordon, and out of it grew the West End Presbyterian Church, which was organized in 1887⁴⁰ with 32 members, many of whom came from the First and Central churches. After the organization, Dunn's chapel at the corner of Oak and Ashby streets was used for services.⁴¹ The church was served at first by various ministers, including Rev. W. A. Nisbet⁴² and Rev. J. H. Alexander,⁴³ until Rev. N. B. Mathes became the first pastor in 1889.⁴⁴ A desirable lot at the corner of Ashby and Gordon Streets was purchased in 1889 for \$2,000,⁴⁵ where a building was erected and occupied until the recent relocation.

This was a period of Sunday School activity upon the part of the First and Central Churches. In 1887 this activity was significant.

36. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 12, 1883; *Atlanta Directory*—1885.

37. *Atlanta City Directory*—1883.

38. Brockman, *Sketch of Druid Hills Church*.

39. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Fall 1926 (Historical Sketch).

40. Sessional Record of Central Church—May 1, 1887; *Atlanta Constitution*—Jan. 2, 1887.

41. Reed, *History of Atlanta*, p. 394; Martin, *Atlanta and Its Builders*, p. 555.

42. Reed, *History of Atlanta*, p. 394.

43. *Atlanta City Directory*—1887.

44. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—June 15, 1888.

45. Reed, *History of Atlanta*, p. 394.

The First Church conducted a mission called the Marietta Street Mission, at which Dr. Barnett conducted a worship service each Friday night.⁴⁶ Later this mission was moved over to Hampton St.,⁴⁷ and out of it grew the Barnett Church, organized in 1890 with 13 members.⁴⁸ During his last summer in the seminary, Mr. Jasper K. Smith preached to this mission,⁴⁹ and when it was organized as a church he became its first pastor.⁵⁰

The Central Church conducted a Sunday School at 235 West Peters Street with Mr. B. D. Cameron as Superintendent.⁵¹ This mission was replaced by one established at 194 West Fair Street, corner Walnut, where Mr. Cameron continued as Superintendent.⁵² The first service at this location was announced for September 30, 1888. At the same time the Central Church sponsored another mission at the corner of Glenn and Martin Streets, known as Rankin's Chapel, of which Dr. Rankin was Superintendent.⁵³ A young candidate for the ministry from Central Church, Mr. F. D. Helmer, regularly conducted services at both these chapels of his church.⁵⁴ The former of these missions was organized as the Fifth Church of Atlanta in the fall of 1888,⁵⁵ and the name changed the following year to Wallace Church⁵⁶ in recognition of the interest of Maj. Campbell Wallace, an active Elder of Central Church. Rev. N. K. Smith was the first ministerial supply.⁵⁷ The latter of the two missions became the Georgia Avenue Church in 1890 with 23 members.⁵⁸ J. W. Pogue was the first pastor.⁵⁹ Hardly had these missions become firmly established and churches organized when interested workers of Central Church turned toward the Glass Works⁶⁰ to find an area for the establishment of a new Sunday School, and of the outcome of this school we shall hear later.

This period of early Atlanta expansion was marked by ambitious

46. *Atlanta Constitution*—Jan. 2, 1887.

47. *Atlanta City Directory*—1887.

48. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 17, 1891.

49. *Ibid.*—Oct. 11, 1890.

50. *Ibid.*—Oct. 10, 1891.

51. *Atlanta Constitution*—Jan. 2, 1887.

52. *Ibid.*—Sept. 30, 1888.

53. *Ibid.*—July 6, 1886.

54. *Ibid.*—Oct. 7, 1888.

55. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Nov. 29, 1888.

56. Stacy, *History of Presbyterian Church*, p. 59; Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 20, 1889.

57. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 22, 1889.

58. *Ibid.*—Apr. 19, 1890.

59. *Ibid.*—Apr. 19, 1890.

60. *Atlanta City Directory*—1890.

building programs which were effectively carried through to completion. The financial strength and resources for such a program could only come from the two mother churches. The mission zeal of their pastors, the loyal support of their members, and the personal devotion of elders and young men who served as superintendents and teachers made possible an effective system of Presbyterian churches throughout the outer fringe of the city. The Central Church erected the Hunter Street Chapel in 1875.⁶¹ The First Church erected its building for the Third Church (later Moore Memorial) at a cost of \$3,000 in 1876.⁶² The First Church next determined to make adequate provision for its own needs. Its building was planned to cost about \$36,000,⁶³ and the basement was first used for services on December 22, 1878.⁶⁴ The building was completed in the following year. Next was the building for the Fourth Church, which was composed largely of members from the First Church, with some assistance from the Central Church. This was a simple building and was erected in 1882,⁶⁵ even before the church was organized. Shortly thereafter the Central Church, under the leadership of Dr. Strickler who had recently come to become pastor, erected the first section of its present well-equipped building in the year 1885.⁶⁶ The church building cost \$50,000 and the pews an additional \$23,000. The dedication service took place on October 4, 1885.

A church building was erected for the Wallace Church in 1888,⁶⁸ to which Maj. Wallace of Central Church was a liberal contributor. Thus may be seen the vigorous prosecution of an expansion program of the Presbyterian Church in the fifteen-year period from 1875-90, which laid the foundation for all of the later work of Atlanta Presbytery.

61. *Atlanta Constitution*—July 20, 1875.

62. Reed, *History of Atlanta*, p. 393.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 390.

64. *Atlanta Constitution*—Dec. 22, 1878.

65. Brockman, *Sketch of Druid Hills Church*.

66. Reed, *History of Atlanta*, p. 393.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 393.

68. *Atlanta Constitution*—Oct. 7, 1888.

V

Rebuilding



5. ISSUES BEFORE THE PRESBYTERY

WHAT were the issues that faced the young Presbytery as it developed its new organization? To certain responsibilities the Presbytery was sensitive, and to them it will be sensitive as long as it is the Presbyterian Church. There was the Domestic Missions responsibility for supplying the churches, for entering new areas, and for assisting the ministerial support in weaker groups. There was the Educational responsibility for raising a trained ministry, for encouraging a liberal higher Christian education, and for providing a printed literature. There was the Foreign Mission responsibility which looked abroad and regarded the whole world as its parish. No further reference will be made to these responsibilities save to state that the Presbytery always regarded them as fundamental and laid upon them the major emphasis.¹

Two attitudes characterized the meetings of Presbytery. Most of the ministers lived in isolation. Their number was small, and there was so little to stimulate their thinking and their devotional life. Meetings of Presbytery offered opportunity for hearing the preaching and unfolding of the Word. These meetings were opened on the first evening with a sermon. Other sermons followed during the session. Ministers and elders went away refreshed in spirit. They also watched for evidence of grace in the churches throughout the Presbytery, and rejoiced in them. Wherever a church experienced

1. See Section II, Chapter 1.

a large ingathering, the fact was recorded in the minutes.² This was their joy.

In their desire to develop the liberality of their people, they were interested in the office of Deacon,³ his duties, and his relation to the Session. Instead of collections for four major causes on special occasions, the Presbytery stressed "the importance of Systematic Benevolence as bearing on all the interests of the church in general, and on the cause of Sustentation in particular."⁴ Dr. Leftwich thought that "the Church is gradually coming to realize giving as a duty as binding as those precepts first received by Moses amid the lightnings of Mount Sinai."⁵ A report to Presbytery in 1875 revealed the humiliating fact that the benevolent giving of Atlanta Presbytery was the lowest of all the presbyteries of Synod.⁶ With the development in the importance of the Deacon came a growing list of contributing churches, better instruction of the people, acceptance of apportionments and reports to Presbytery. The words "as God hath prospered"⁷ came into use and the principle of the tithe was set forth.⁸ Hear the direction of Presbytery, "That the Deacon be solemnly urged to see that all the people have knowledge of the regular collections, and that all absentees be called upon at home or elsewhere that they may have opportunity to discharge their duty and obtain the blessing promised to the liberal giver."⁹

As the Presbytery began to grow in numbers and the individual churches became stronger, there was need for more efficient administration. Presbytery looked to its own government. An elaborate set of Standing Rules was adopted, including this⁴ "At each spring meeting of Presbytery the ministers and elders shall present reports of their reciprocal duties—embracing a statement by the minister of the fidelity of the people in the discharge of their pecuniary obligations, and by the elders of the diligence and fidelity of the minister in discharge of his pastoral duties."¹⁰ At the beginning of each stated meeting the retiring Moderator read the standing rules to the new Moderator.¹¹ Presbytery adopted the following resolution: "it

2. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta (manuscript copy), p. 97.

3. Ibid.—Apr. 11, 1868.

4. Ibid., p. 201.

5. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta (manuscript copy), p. 270.

6. Ibid., p. 335.

7. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Mar. 28, 1885.

8. Ibid.—Apr. 18, 1890.

9. Ibid.—Oct. 7, 1881.

10. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Fall 1881 (Appendix).

11. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta (manuscript copy), p. 390.

is resolved that hereafter the moderator of the Presbytery be nominated at the preceding meeting."¹² This rule seems not to have been followed. To implement its rules, Presbytery drew up its "Interrogatories," embracing 39 questions to be answered upon a printed blank by each church at the spring meeting. Here are sample questions: 2. "Does your pastor attend his appointments regularly? 6. Do the elders visit the flock? 12. (Prayer meeting) Do all the elders attend regularly? 18. Does your pastor preach regularly to the children? 26. Do you contribute to the five Schemes of Benevolence? 35. Any members that habitually absent themselves?"¹³

Presbytery was concerned also with the basic constitution of the Church. It discussed a method of amending the Doctrinal Standard of the church and gave its approval to the one submitted by the Assembly.¹⁴ It resisted the adoption of a new Book of Church Order, preferring amendments.¹⁵ Each time it rejected the proposed book, although the book was adopted later by the Assembly.¹⁶ It declined to approve the new Book of Discipline.¹⁷ It declined several times to approve the Directory of Worship.¹⁸ Jealous of its own authority, it overtured the General Assembly to pronounce upon the nature and authority of "deliverances of the General Assembly."¹⁹ It, however, exercised its authority over the churches and ministers by calling the roll at the close as well as at the beginning of its sessions.²⁰ It demanded explanation by the churches for non-representation at the previous meeting.²¹ It called the roll to determine whether its members had complied with its mandates.²²

It was interested in the Sunday School movement. It stated in 1868, "There is a revival of zeal for Sabbath Schools."²³ It drafted an answer to these questions: "Is the Sunday School subject to the review and control of Presbytery?" "Are Sabbath Schools a Scriptural institution?" "Do Sunday School Teachers possess an authority in teaching and expounding the Scriptures equal to that of the Minister of the Gospel?" "May an irreligious person teach in the

12. Ibid.—Oct. 8, 1892.

13. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta (manuscript copy), p. 209.

14. Ibid.—Apr. 20, 1886.

15. Ibid. (manuscript copy), 139.

16. Ibid., p. 404 and p. 442.

17. Ibid., p. 217.

18. Ibid., p. 565—Apr. 21, 1890.

19. Ibid., p. 484.

20. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta (see Spring 1906; Fall 1909).

21. Ibid. (manuscript copy), p. 389.

22. Ibid.—Apr. 20, 1886.

23. Ibid. (manuscript copy), p. 49.

Sabbath School?" "Who should judge the qualifications of teachers? By whom should their authority be conferred? In what way?"²⁴ It directed that "more vigilant and diligent supervision be exercised over our Sabbath Schools."²⁵ There was a feeling that the growing movement must be directed. The same was true of Church Societies. Presbytery resisted those societies that sought "to do their work through any agency independent of church control and unauthorized by church courts."²⁶ On the other hand it stated "that within the church and subject to the review and control of the church courts, this Presbytery heartily approves of the most thorough organization of all its members."²⁶

With the changes brought about by industrialization and an intricate society, the Presbytery was concerned about the preservation of the Sabbath. It set up a Committee on the Sabbath.²⁷ It stated, "The Sabbath as one of the great institutions of Christianity is to be sustained, not alone by argument, but by its observance."²⁸ It called upon "everyone, who loves the cause of Christ, to contribute his part to sustain a proper respect for the Sabbath, and to check the incoming tide of Sabbath desecration."²⁸

The Presbytery was concerned with "worldly amusements." It adopted a long resolution covering in detail a very broad field, including "the Theater, the Circus, the Races, Balls and dancing parties, Card Playing, and many of the popular modes of seeking gain: such as Lotteries, Raffles, and every species of Gambling, and of demoralizing Speculation."²⁹ Following this resolution, the Session of Central Church brought one of its Deacons, Frank Block, to trial, at whose home in a social gathering the young people had participated in dancing. This "Block case" was before the courts of the church for over two years in its various resolutions and complaints. Mr. Block was exonerated, but the case led to much confusion in the church, to divisions in the congregation, to pain in the Presbytery, to the resignation of the pastor, to the visit of a commission of the Presbytery to the church, and in the end accomplished little good, and settled no issue.³⁰

Occasion came when the Presbytery in deep pain was compelled

24. Ibid., p. 149.

25. Ibid., p. 201.

26. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 21, 1890.

27. Ibid. (manuscript copy), p. 533.

28. Ibid., pp. 534-5.

29. Ibid., p. 395.

30. Stacy, *History of the Presbyterian Church* (see Chapter XIII).

to preserve the purity of its own life. With grief, it deposed from the office of the ministry for gross immorality one of its formerly trusted and respected ministers.³¹ It also manifested a splendid quality of soul when it promised the Rev. Frank Cowan who was leaving the Presbytery for mission service in Brazil, that in the event of unexpected emergency it would provide for his only and dependent sister.³²

At the close of this period of Rebuilding, the Seminary was in trouble. The entire matter of Evolution was introduced into the discussion. Dr. James Woodrow had been asked to present his views before the Directors of the Seminary. That Board by a majority vote expressed its confidence in Dr. Woodrow.³³ The two members of the Board from the Presbytery of Atlanta, Rev. James Stacy and Elder George W. Scott, with one other member presented to the Board a protest, along with their explanations.³⁴ Overtures went up to the Assembly from supporting Presbyteries and Synods. The Presbytery of Atlanta overtured the Synod of Georgia in the matter, and the Synod in turn protested to the Assembly.³⁵ The Assembly then made a declaration which dissented from the action of the Seminary Board. Among the members of the Assembly's Committee on Bills and Overtures which framed the action of the Assembly was Dr. Strickler of Central Church.³⁶ The Presbytery then heartily endorsed the action of the Assembly. Through a period of about four years the Presbytery and Church were agitated by this unfortunate controversy, which before it was concluded led to the removal of Dr. Woodrow, and nearly wrought destruction to the Seminary.³⁷

The years of rebuilding strengthened the organization of Presbytery. Some times were stormy, but the years resulted in welding together in one common cause the churches, ministers, and elders for remarkable activity to follow.

31. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta (manuscript copy), p. 106.

32. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 12, 1889.

33. Stacy, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia*, p. 216.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 219.

35. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1884; Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 10, 1884.

36. Minutes of the General Assembly, p. 8—1886.

37. Stacy, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia*, Chapter XIV.

STRENGTH OF THE
PRESBYTERY OF ATLANTA

As seen in 1890.

Number of Churches	42
Number of Ministers	22
Whole Number of Communicants	3,896
Number of Sunday Schools	33
Sunday School Enrollment	3,422
Total Gifts to Benevolences	\$12,623
Churches Holding Service Each Sunday	9
Churches Added to the Roll in the Period 1867-90 . .	23
Churches Erased from the Roll	10

VI

Expansion



1. OUTSIDE ATLANTA

RAPIDLY growing Atlanta began very early to influence the remainder of the Presbytery. That influence became marked during the period beginning with the 90's. The city lured many choice spirits from the surrounding territory. There was a growing market for agricultural products. There was a place ready to absorb surplus population. Lines of transportation all pointed to Atlanta. Its accumulating wealth was inviting industry. In the preceding section of this book was noted the phenomenal progress and advance of Atlanta, while in the remainder of the Presbytery during the same twenty-three years there was merely fair recovery. The spirit of the church, however, was becoming hopeful. Not only was there a growing city to be churched, but there was a surrounding territory where Presbyterian churches were few. The task was two-fold: namely, to occupy the city as it grew, and to meet the destitution abroad. So distinct were these tasks, that it will serve our purpose best to follow separately the extension of the church in the two sections. The mode of approach was different, and the available resources different. The pattern was one outside the city, and another within.

We shall consider first the expansion in the outer section of Presbytery. We are examining a program of church extension where succeeding results can offer interpretation. First to present itself was the person of Rev. Joseph B. Mack. He had become acquainted in Georgia when he was financial agent for Columbia Seminary.

When, therefore, the Synod of Georgia sought an Evangelist for the state, it laid its hands on Dr. Mack. He was 52 years of age, and a man of fine physical stamina. He had gifts both for preaching and of promotion. Though he retained his home in Fort Mills, South Carolina, he served as Evangelist for the Synod of Georgia eight years, from the close of 1890 to the close of 1898,¹ and then served as the Evangelist for the Presbytery of Atlanta for two years.² During his years as Evangelist for the Synod, a large part of his effort was given to the Presbytery of Atlanta.³ In that decade he was instrumental in the organization of seventeen churches, scattered widely over the Presbytery. They varied in size from seven at Senoia, Zebulon and Kelly, to 33 at Riverdale and 36 at Morris Grove. His stay at any one point was necessarily brief. Easily, he made friends and won the respect of the people. It was his practice to seek out a meeting place and begin a series of services. Being a most acceptable preacher, he gathered a congregation. From among them, he enlisted the Presbyterians and any others who might be inclined toward that church. Then came a petition for signatures for presentation to the Presbytery. After approval by Presbytery he returned with some nearby members of Presbytery to organize a church. The members were usually few, because of the short time he could give to any community. Some nearby minister was engaged to serve the church temporarily until presbytery could make further arrangement. He proved very successful in enlisting the new church in the erection of a building.

Seventeen church organizations were left as a result of his labors, and one asks why, after a period of fifty years, only two of them had grown sufficiently strong to need no financial assistance from Presbytery. So great was the financial load upon the Presbytery that it found it necessary to dispense with the services of the Evangelist⁴ in order to provide ministers for the churches newly organized. Was there a lack of care as to the location of churches? Were they too small in membership to survive? Were there too many new churches for the strength of the Presbytery? Was the Presbytery derelict in its financial support of the churches? How account for the slow growth of the churches? Is this experience a normal course through which any presbytery must go if it would expand its work?

Let us follow the story. Work was already established at a few

1. *Ministerial Directory*. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1898.

2. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 6, 1898; Oct. 12, 1900.

3. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1890, p. 11.

4. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 12, 1900.

points in the Presbytery. Nearby towns were drawing members from such rural churches as Fairview, Philadelphia, and Greenville, thus making available groups to form other churches. Dr. Mack found a ready welcome in the private homes of the people, and is yet pleasantly remembered in widely scattered places as a welcome guest. Stories of the organization of two churches from the words of persons present might be typical of the procedure followed. Hear Mr. L. N. Sudderth of Buford:

For some time during 1890 Rev. J. L. King came to Buford once a month, and preached to some Presbyterians who lived here. On Thursday, December 4, 1890, Rev. Dr. J. B. Mack, Synodical Evangelist, came to Buford and preached at night. The result was that a petition for the organization of a Presbyterian Church at Buford was sent up to the Presbytery of Atlanta signed . . . (12 names here) . . . , all of whom except Mr. Pool were members of the Presbyterian Church . . . when the petition was presented, Dr. Mack was instructed to organize the church on the third Sabbath in December (the 21st). On Friday night, December 19, Rev. J. L. King preached in Buford Baptist Church, which was kindly tendered us. After the sermon, Dr. Mack announced the action of Presbytery, and on the next day Miss Dovie Stewart, a baptized child of the covenant was received into the communion of the church. Dr. Mack preached Saturday night. On Sabbath morning, Mr. Adam Pool, who was then 82 years old, was received into the church and baptized at his home. Mrs. Lizzie Shelley was also received by letter. After a sermon by Dr. Mack a Presbyterian Church of 14 members was organized.⁵

Then followed the election of officers. A briefer statement is from Dr. H. H. Kemp of Senoia:

On November 14, 1892, Reverend Dr. J. B. Mack came to Senoia and preached for several days. One result of the services was a petition for the organization of a church. The Presbytery of Atlanta having granted the request, on December 5, 1892, a church of 7 members was started in the Methodist church building by the committee of Presbytery, consisting of Rev. Dr. Mack and Rev. Woodbridge . . . (7 names listed here) . . . Mr. Elam Deracken was elected and installed a ruling elder of the church on the same night.⁶

Widely scattered churches were organized in a similar manner from small groups of persons discovered and banded together: Buford with 14 members (1890), Barnesville with 10 members

5. Sudderth, *Sketch of Buford Church*.

6. Kemp, *Sketch of Senoia Church*.

(1891), Austell with 12 members (1891), Senoia with seven members (1892), Manchester (removed to Hapeville) with 21 members (1894), Luther Hays with nine members (1894), Winder with eight members (1895), Zebulon with seven members (1898), Bamah with 11 members (1898), and Kelly with seven members (1900).⁷

A note here about Manchester. At that time the present College Park was known as Manchester, and the Presbyterians, some of whom had come from Philadelphia Church,⁸ were scattered over a wide area including both Hapeville and Manchester. The place of the first organization was at Manchester, hence the name, and then because there was a call for a church at Hapeville where the majority of the members resided, the Presbytery removed the location to Hapeville in 1896 and changed the name of the organization.⁹ By 1900, the group in the community which became known as College Park had gained sufficient strength to be organized into a separate church with 14 members.¹⁰ Bamah Church consisted of a small group of people near Luxomi in Gwinnett County.¹¹ Samuel DuBose, a son of the former Evangelist J. E. DuBose,¹² was teaching school at Luxomi, and, under the suggestion of Dr. Mack, became the leader of the group organized.¹³ Services were held in the schoolhouse,¹⁴ and when Mr. DuBose, who later entered the ministry, left Luxomi for Norcross, the church was dissolved.¹⁵

At several points within the Presbytery, members of rural churches who had settled in nearby communities were enlisted for separate church organizations. Buildings had already been erected in Riverdale (1895)¹⁶ and in Lawrenceville (1891),¹⁷ when separate churches were organized to occupy them. Early in the century the original Greenville Church was organized in the country about three miles from the town of Greenville. In 1896, 11 members of the church who had moved into the town were organized as the Stacy Church.¹⁸ At points where Sabbath Schools had been con-

7. See corresponding Minutes of Atlanta Presbytery at organization dates.

8. Sessional Records of Philadelphia Church—1896.

9. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 17, 1896.

10. Ibid.—Oct. 11, 1900.

11. Ibid.—Oct. 6, 1898.

12. *Ministerial Directory* (see Samuel DuBose).

13. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 13, 1899.

14. Statement of Mrs. C. A. Kelley, Lilburn, Ga.

15. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 26, 1901.

16. Statement of Mrs. R. L. Lasseter.

17. Flanagan, *History of Gwinnett County*, p. 266.

18. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 9, 1896.

ducted for many years churches were organized. At Lithonia, a Sabbath School had been conducted by certain members of the Salem Church who lived in Lithonia.¹⁹ These members, along with others, largely the fruits of the Sabbath School, were organized as the Lithonia Church in 1891 with 26 members.²⁰ At Morris Grove in northeast Henry County, Rev. W. P. Hemphill had led in the development of a rural Sabbath School which met in the school building.²¹ At this place a church of 36 members was organized in 1896.²² Services continued in the local building for a number of years, with several pastors supplying, until the time of Mr. Hemphill's death, when the church disintegrated.²³ The Ingleside Church was organized from a group of members of Midway and Decatur churches who had moved out to Ingleside.²⁴ There a Sunday School had been established, representing all denominations, and out of the Presbyterian members came the Ingleside Church in 1900 with 19 members.²⁵ Dr. Mack concluded his work as Evangelist very shortly after the organization of the last named church and the completion of its building.²⁶

The Presbytery then faced its new problem: "so many children that she didn't know what to do." She was in debt and could not afford to employ an evangelist. With so many scattered churches, too weak to support a minister, those only could be cared for that were close to a stronger church with a minister. The life of many churches hung in the balance. Some simply died. In others, a few aggressive and determined souls led the group till better days would come. For a year thoughtful men pondered over the situation. In the meantime Presbytery made use of Rev. W. P. Hemphill, a man of interesting gifts.²⁷ He was an elder in the Griffin Church²⁸ with a passion for Christian work. He loved Sunday School work and he loved little children. He was concerned also about rural people and he understood them. He loved the hymns of the church and he could sing. He was never happier than when cultivating a little rural Sunday School. The Presbytery licensed him to preach, and

19. Statement of Mrs. James Mackie, Lithonia, Ga.

20. *Ibid.*—Apr. 17, 1891.

21. Unconfirmed report in community.

22. Minutes Atlanta Presbytery—Oct. 9, 1896.

23. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 15, 1908.

24. *Ibid.*—Fall 1928 (see sketch of Ingleside Church).

25. *Ibid.*—Oct. 11, 1900.

26. *Ibid.*—Oct. 12, 1900.

27. *Ibid.*—Apr. 17, 1903.

28. *Ibid.* (memorial to W. P. Hemphill)—Apr. 18, 1907.

later ordained him as an evangelist to serve some of the people that he loved.²⁹ With so many neglected churches, the Presbytery made him Rural Evangelist to help where he could, and placed its tent at his disposal.³⁰ Where rural churches languished, Mr. Hemphill set up his tent, announced a Sunday School, made friendly visits among the people, and won the hearts of the children and the confidence of the parents. Then he arranged a series of evangelistic services, strengthened the church in membership, and moved on to the next point.³¹

In the course of his journeys he visited the town of Bremen. Here he developed a large Sunday School, from which was organized a church of nine members in 1902.³² He moved his tent to Panthersville,³³ following the same program, and that same year a church of 23 members was organized.³⁴ His attention was then directed to a point about four miles northeast of Douglasville, in Douglas County, where he might begin a work. Here his activity led to the organization of McTyre's Chapel in 1893 with 25 members, and to the erection of a small building.³⁵ During these years Mr. Hemphill received very little financial support. One year his salary was designated as \$300 and perquisites.³⁶ He owned his horse and buggy and knew the roads of Presbytery. Leisurely, he made his way about, and was welcomed to the homes of the people and to what they had. As he traveled he was a personal evangelist, and made friends for Christ and the church. Of the churches he organized, Bremen and McTyre's Chapel were isolated and weak, and no adequate provision could be made for caring for them. The Panthersville Church, being near to Decatur and enjoying its encouragement, survived the difficult days. Mr. Hemphill retired from the work in 1905, and after a year's illness was gone.³⁷

The Home Mission Committee was greatly concerned. Rev. C. R. Nisbet gave able leadership as Chairman of the Committee, and was followed by Rev. Lynn R. Walker and Dr. A. A. Little.³⁸ They reviewed the trends in the Presbytery of Atlanta and noted the

29. *Ministerial Directory* (see W. P. Hemphill).

30. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta, p. 30.

31. Statement of Otis Turner, Concord, Ga.—Apr. 17, 1903.

32. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 9, 1902.

33. Statement of S. D. Warren, Atlanta, Ga.

34. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 9, 1902.

35. *Ibid.*—Oct. 8, 1903.

36. *Ibid.*—Oct. 9, 1901, p. 21.

37. *Ministerial Directory* (see W. P. Hemphill).

38. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—1906-15.

encouraging growth of membership in the city area, but in spite of the organization of 19 churches in the outer territory of the Presbytery, they observed that it had not gained in membership. New churches were organized, but older churches were growing smaller or dying. The Committee sought out a leader for the work who would be not merely evangelist. A transition from the evangelist to the administrator was coming. Rev. Frank D. Hunt was called to the work.³⁹ He was 47 years of age, had studied law, served in Y.M.C.A. work, and brought a varied experience in rural and town churches.⁴⁰ He faced the decline in rural population, and the coming of the textile industry. He dealt with a widely scattered constituency for which there were insufficient Home Mission funds to afford a regular ministry. He noted the growing Atlanta churches and foresaw increasing funds from them with which to build up the weaker areas. The little churches were still too many for the amount of Home Mission money available. He organized but two churches. One was a group from the Flat Rock Church who had moved from the country to Stockbridge and who were organized into a church of 20 members in 1909.⁴¹ The other was in the town of Manchester which had sprung up as an industrial town. A hopeful start was made there in 1913, when a church of 20 members was organized in a meeting at the Methodist Church.⁴²

In no other period of equal length in the history of the Presbytery were there so many churches organized. This large number of weak churches, with the handicaps of the business depressions of the time and the removals of peoples to industrial towns, furnished the Presbytery with its task for decades to follow.

It is encouraging to note that during the period of expansion outside of the city of Atlanta, there were those churches which had survived the days of reconstruction. They had served their localities with faithfulness, and borne their testimony to their Lord. They had not grown large, but they had served. They had been the means of converting sinners and comforting saints. They were steadying influences amid changing conditions. To the sacrificial labors of their ministers much is due.

The long ministry of two of these ministers is significant. Rev. James Stacy came to the Presbytery of Flint River in 1855, and two years later moved to Newnan where he served the Newnan Church

39. Ibid.—Apr. 17, 1907.

40. *Ministerial Directory* (see Frank D. Hunt).

41. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Feb. 29, 1909.

42. Ibid.—Apr. 15, 1914.

for 43 years. He continued to reside there, preaching as opportunity afforded, until his death in 1912 ended a ministry of 58 years. He was the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Georgia and of the Presbytery of Atlanta for several decades, and produced a *History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia*. His crowning glory was the character of his life. One indifferent man, who had known him for years said, "I can't deny Christianity while Dr. Stacy lives it."⁴³

On the opposite side of the Presbytery was the Rev. Henry Quigg who was received into the Presbytery in 1867 and passed away in 1907, after giving nearly 41 years to the service of the Presbytery. Through all these years he was pastor of Smyrna Church. Along with this service he ministered to the churches of Conyers, Bethany, Philadelphia and others. Born in Ireland, he possessed a ready Irish wit and manifested the joy of the Christian life.⁴⁴ He was a man of happy disposition, a gifted speaker, and a sympathetic pastor. His interest in rural life and its people did much to bless a large area of the Presbytery.

These men who served so long, and others who served a shorter period, along with a great host of elders and members moved by the same Spirit have held aloft a torch to lighten the world around them. Through difficult days they were the Presbyterian Church in the outlying areas, who preserved to later generations the privileges they now enjoy.

43. Minutes Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 18, 1912 (memorial of James Stacy).

44. Ibid.—Apr. 16, 1908.

VI

Expansion



2. WITHIN ATLANTA

WHILE the Home Mission Committee through Dr. Mack was dotting the outer presbytery with little new churches, which would have a long hard road to strength and self-support, there was a parallel concerted effort within the urban center to establish churches which promised a rapid growth. This development within the city can be better understood if we remember the vitality of the Sunday School movement of the day. Men of Christian zeal adopted the Sunday School as a means for guiding the youth in the various neighborhoods. Leaders of young people in the churches turned to the Sunday School as an opportunity for service. The afternoon Sunday School was the most practical form, because it permitted those who would teach to continue their own training in the morning school. Sunday School after Sunday School was established in such neighborhoods as were deemed destitute. If interest developed, they were maintained; if interest waned, they were abandoned. Such names appear in this period as the Cameron Mission,¹ the Woodward Avenue Mission,² the Bolton Mission,³ the Greenwood Mission,⁴ the Highland Avenue Mission,⁵ the Thurmond Street Mis-

1. Atlanta City Directory—1909.

2. Ibid—1899.

3. *Atlanta Journal*—Nov. 3, 1893 (Moore memorial notice).

4. Minutes of Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 11, 1900.

5. Atlanta City Directory—1899.

sion,⁶ and among the Negroes the Butler Street Mission⁷ and the Richmond Street Mission.⁸ All of these were later abandoned after they had rendered a useful service.

We might observe growing Presbyterianism. In the village of Kirkwood, between Atlanta and Decatur, was a growing population, leaders among whom were members of the Decatur Presbyterian Church. Need for religious life in their midst was seen, and people often gathered in the school house for a Sunday afternoon preaching service.⁹ Miss Anna Emery, a member of the Decatur Presbyterian Church at the time, undertook the erection of a house of worship. Friends, years after, recalled her making her visits with her little black bag.¹⁰ Largely as a result of her efforts a Union church building was erected, in which was maintained a community Sabbath School and in which also the various denominations conducted services.¹¹ Several denominations withdrew to form congregations of their own, and the trustees deeded the building to the Presbyterians. A church of 21 members was organized in 1892,¹² most of them coming as a colony from Decatur Church.¹³ Dr. Strickler and a few others conducted services in the church during the first year after organization. From the offerings made at these services, which Dr. Strickler refused to accept, was purchased the pulpit furniture since used in the church.¹⁴ Rev. R. O. Flinn was the first installed pastor,¹⁵ and among this group he found his faithful helpmeet of the years.¹⁶

Another Sunday School was established by a class of young men of the Central Church under the leadership of Mrs. R. A. Anderson. They fixed their attention upon a vacant store building in Edgewood, between Lee and Pearl Streets, facing the Georgia Railroad. Mr. Robert E. Rushton was superintendent of this Sunday School for about four years. Its first meeting in 1890 found 19 persons in attendance. Soon it outgrew the quarters, a lot was purchased on Decatur Street near Delta Place, and a church building erected

6. *Atlanta Journal* (Moore memorial notice)—Nov. 3, 1893.

7. Minutes of Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 10, 1900, p. 21.

8. *Atlanta City Directory*—1905.

9. Minutes of Presbytery of Atlanta—Spring 1928 (historical sketch).

10. Statement of L. L. Rogers, Kirkwood.

11. Minutes of Presbytery of Atlanta—Spring 1928 (historical sketch).

12. Minutes of Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 7, 1892.

13. Sessional Records of Decatur Church—June 4, 1892.

14. Statement of Miss Carrie Scott, Kirkwood.

15. Minutes of Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 19, 1895.

16. Ministerial Directory.

and ready for service on the first Sunday in August, 1894.¹⁷ Late in 1896 the Presbytery answered a petition by appointing a commission to organize the Inman Park Church with 50 members in December.¹⁸ Rev. D. G. Armstrong was the first pastor.¹⁹ During the pastorate of Rev. J. B. Ficklem, a new church building was erected on Euclid Avenue at Druid Circle.²⁰

An interesting development of the time followed as the population moved out Peachtree to the north of Atlanta. Ponce de Leon Avenue seemed to be the limit of population, yet a group of members of the First Church felt that there should be a Presbyterian Church in this northern section. An informal meeting of those interested was called for November 4, 1898 at the residence of Mrs. J. M. High. During the discussion of their hopes Mr. Walker Inman challenged the group to test the prospects by attempting to raise a sum of \$25,000, saying that to this he would make a conditional offer of \$5,000. Mr. High promised \$1,000 and Mr. Hoke Smith promised \$1,000. They agreed then to meet the following Sunday at the home of Mr. Walker Inman. There was great interest at this second meeting, as was manifested by the presence of about 100 persons, and there they adopted a definite resolution to proceed to the organization of a church. The third Sunday they met at the home of Mr. Hoke Smith, where they were made glad by the report that already \$16,125 had been subscribed. Presbytery was called to meet, and a fourth gathering was held on November 25, when a petition to Presbytery showed a list of 105 persons, largely members of First and Central Churches.²¹ The North Avenue Church was organized December 4, with 117 members.²² Through the Christian courtesy of the Merritts Avenue Methodist Church the North Avenue Presbyterian Church used this Methodist building, holding services in the afternoon.²³ Dr. R. O. Flinn accepted the call to become pastor. No time was lost in planning for the erection of the building. A lot was purchased at the present site for about \$18,000 and construction began.²⁴ When the General Assembly was in session at the Central Church in 1900, the Moderator, Hon. Joseph

17. Martin, *Atlanta and Its Builders*, p. 555; Atlanta City Directory—1904.

18. Minutes of Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 15, 1897.

19. Ibid.—June 21, 1897.

20. Stacy, *History of the Presbyterian Church*, p. 60.

21. *Atlanta Journal*—June 24, 1901; Minutes of Presbytery of Atlanta—Nov. 25, 1898.

22. Minutes of Presbytery of Atlanta—Nov. 25, 1898.

23. Martin, *Atlanta and Its Builders*, p. 556.

24. Ibid., p. 556.

Martin, at a special service, laid the corner-stone.²⁵ The first formal service in the church building, which cost \$50,000, was held June 2, 1901.²⁶ A few weeks later on June 23, Dr. B. M. Palmer of New Orleans and the first Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, came to Atlanta to preach the dedicatory sermon.²⁷ Thus, under most auspicious circumstances, was ushered into the family of churches of Presbytery one which was to wield a large influence in city, state, and in the world.

We turn now to that section rapidly developing out to the north on Boulevard. The Fourth Church had been located on Chamberlain Street. Among its members were those who could see the trend of population changes and advocated the removal of the church to a more promising location. Opinion was divided upon the matter,²⁸ and this question along with several others brought wide division in the church.²⁹ The effects were tragic and the old Fourth Church nearly perished. A group of 52 members determined to venture out as a colony. They gained permission from the Jackson Hill Baptist Church to use their building to conduct a Sunday School and to hold a preaching service each Sunday afternoon.³⁰ A Presbytery commission, in response to a petition from this group, met on Sunday afternoon, June 30, 1901, and organized the Westminster Church with 69 members.³¹ Plans for a building to cost about \$18,000 were laid, and a location secured at the corner of Boulevard and Forrest Avenues.³² Rev. Charles R. Nisbet became the first pastor and assumed the work in September.³³ The Lecture Room of the new building was ready for use in May, 1902, and the auditorium ready several months later.³⁴ From the first the church asked no financial assistance of Presbytery, and within the brief space of eight years the membership had reached 500.³⁵ And what of the Fourth Church? It struggled for its very existence, and by 1910 had wasted until there were but 40 members, the church again requiring Home Mission aid.³⁶ The old building was sold, and the

25. Ibid., p. 556 (Minutes of the General Assembly).

26. *Atlanta Journal*—June 3, 1901.

27. *The Atlanta Journal*—June 22, 1901.

28. Martin, *Atlanta and Its Builders*, p. 557.

29. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—June 25, 1901.

30. Strouss, *Sketch of Westminster Church*.

31. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Aug. 30, 1901.

32, 33, 34. Strouss, *Sketch of Westminster Church*.

35. Minutes of the General Assembly (Statistical Table).

36. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 14, 1915.

church removed to a new location on Highland Avenue and Blue Ridge, where it became the Druid Park Church.³⁷ Thence it began its upward climb until it became the Druid Hills Church³⁸ and took its place among the strongest churches of Presbytery.

We turn now to the south of the city and note the mission mentioned in an earlier chapter and known as the Glass Works Mission. The Young Men's Prayer Association of the Central Church was continually seeking points for mission service. They had opened a mission Sunday School on Ridge Avenue near Weyman in 1889, which after about a year was moved to the corner of Fortress and Buena Vista Avenues.³⁹ By 1894 they had acquired a lot and erected a small building of their own on Pryor Street at the corner of Vassar, which they called the Pryor Street Mission.⁴⁰ Growing out of this afternoon mission Sunday School, which had been conducted for over ten years, came the organization of a church in June, 1902 with 85 charter members.⁴¹ It entered the Presbyterian family as the Pryor Street Presbyterian Church. The wise preparation of this mission for church organization was the work of Rev. H. C. Hammond, a young man from the Prayer Association of Central Church. He had been ordained to the ministry in 1898, had guided this young group, and had gathered the large number mentioned.⁴² Upon organization of the church Mr. Hammond became its first pastor and remained for nine years more.⁴² During this pastorate the church secured the present lot and erected a temporary building, which was in use till 1912, when the congregation entered the first section of the building used till 1958.⁴³ It is worthy of mention that from the beginning the church did not look to the Home Mission Committee for the support of its minister.

The eyes of other Presbyterian boards were turned upon the growing city of Atlanta by the migration of persons from other sections. The Associate Reformed Church,⁴⁴ the Cumberland Presbyterian Church,⁴⁵ and the United Presbyterian Church all laid plans to establish themselves in the city. To the first two, reference will be made at another place in this volume. To the United Presbyterian Church we will make reference here because of a close

37. Ibid.—Nov. 11, 1909.

38. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Sept. 1914 (Roll of Churches).

39. Ibid.—Spring 1930 (see Historical Sketch).

40. *Atlanta Journal*—Feb. 24, 1894.

41. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—June 26, 1902.

42. Ibid.—Feb. 12, 1898; Oct. 9, 1902.

43. Ibid.—Spring 1930 (see Historical Sketch).

44 and 45. See Section VI, Chapter 6.

connection with the Presbytery of Atlanta. In early 1910, the Board of that church encouraged a movement for a United Presbyterian Church in Atlanta.⁴⁶ A Sunday School met for the first time in the Woman's Club Building on February 20, 1910.⁴⁷ The school was in operation for a few months at this location and then removed to the Y.W.C.A. Hall at Viaduct Place. A preaching service was announced for June 11 to make preparation for the organization of a church.⁴⁸ The next week, Dr. R. W. McGranahan of Knoxville, Tennessee was present in the name of and by the authority of the Presbytery of Tennessee and organized the group⁴⁹ of about 30 persons into a church,⁵⁰ to be known as the United Presbyterian Church. Rev. J. J. Thomson came to Atlanta to become pastor. He preached at two points, the Y.W.C.A. Hall and at Center Hill. Mr. Thomson left and Rev. William Duncan came.⁵¹ In October of the next year, by direction of the Home Mission Board, effort was concentrated in the areas of Ormewood Park and Center Hill. Services were held in the Ormewood Park school building.⁵¹ Then in the spring of 1912 the small group met to consider plans for the erection of a church building. By this time the Board of the United Presbyterian Church became discouraged at the slow growth, reviewed the entire enterprise, and withdrew further financial support.⁵¹ On July 24, 1912, in their extremity, the congregation turned to the Presbytery of Atlanta, seeking admission into that body.⁵² The church was received with the stipulated provision that "we be permitted the exclusive use of the Psalms in all our public worship."⁵³ Mr. Duncan, their pastor, was received at the same time.⁵³ The church was enrolled as the Ormewood Park Presbyterian Church. By the spring, two years later, the congregation moved into its own building⁵¹ which cost about \$6,000.⁵⁴ Financial assistance was given by Presbytery to the church for about ten years until it became self-supporting.⁵⁵

Turn now to the west. When Mr. S. D. Warren moved out to Battle Hill neighborhood, he found no Presbyterian Church, and having been Superintendent of the Panthersville Sunday School, he

46. *The Atlanta Journal*—June 11, 1910.

47. *Ibid.*—Mar. 5, 1910.

48. *Ibid.*—June 11, 1910.

49. J. L. Hudson, *Sketch of Ormewood Park Church*.

50 and 51. *Ibid.*

52. *Ibid.*

53. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Sept. 25, 1912.

54. *Ibid.*—Sept. 17, 1913, p. 19.

55. See Statistical Tables of General Assembly.

felt the importance of establishing a Presbyterian Sunday School.⁵⁶ He found others of like mind, and together they gained permission from the Battle Hill Methodist Church, on Racine Street, to use their building for an afternoon Sunday School, which they called "Emmanuel."⁵⁷ Wallace Church was the nearest Presbyterian church. Its pastor, the Rev. W. H. Chapman, encouraged interest in the new school, and held preaching services in connection with it.⁵⁸ The Gordon Street Church was organized in the spring of 1911 with 24 members as a result of this enterprise.⁵⁹ Within a very short time it became evident that the location of the Gordon Street Church was so much more promising than that of the Wallace Church that a merger of the two was brought about by the close of 1912.⁶⁰ For a brief period after organization, the church worshiped in a tent, and then in the Redmen's Hall until they could erect the building which was until recently occupied as the place of worship. This building, which cost about \$6,000,⁶¹ was dedicated in July, 1913.⁶² In a very few years this church had become strong enough to support itself, and has since been a vigorous help in Presbytery.

Certain outlying towns were beginning to experience growth, and Presbyterianism was clamoring for an expression. A few Presbyterians lived in and near East Point, and were asking why there could not be a Presbyterian Church there. Some worshiped at College Park, and some in West End and at Central Church in Atlanta. Mr. Garnett McMillan of Central Church and Mr. G. B. McGaughey of West End Church became interested in an afternoon Sunday School.⁶³ They found an unused store building just off the highway at Main and Church streets and here established their school. It was the center of religious life till the organization of the East Point Church could be effected in December 1911, with 26 members.⁶⁴ The Rev. Fritz Rauschenburg had just come to College Park Church, and held services at East Point in the afternoon,⁶⁵ until Rev. E. A. Thomas could be brought in for a year of pioneer

56. Statement of S. D. Warren, Atlanta, Ga.

57 and 58. *Atlanta Journal*—Mar. 4, 1911.

59. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—May 8, 1911.

60. *Ibid.*—Dec. 30, 1912.

61. *Ibid.*—Sept. 17, 1913, p. 19.

62. *Sketch of Gordon St. Church* (manuscript at church).

63. Statement of Mrs. Carrie Belle Tweedy, East Point, Ga.

64. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—April 17, 1912.

65. Statement by Rev. Fritz Rauschenburg, Decatur, Ga.

work.⁶⁶ Dr. A. R. Holderby came, in 1915, to spend the last years of his ministry.⁶⁷ The present site was purchased. A tent was used for a while, and then a very temporary structure was erected to house the congregation until further steps could be taken.⁶⁸ This church, very weak from the first, was slow in growth. It struggled against many odds, and 25 years elapsed before the church was strong enough to walk alone.

With the growth of Atlanta, attention was turned also toward Decatur as a place of residence. Then a movement began in earnest which has resulted in the merging of the two population centers. The Rev. J. G. Patton came to Decatur in 1896, and led the church there in the early days of transition. He was a Tennessean by birth, and brought to Decatur a ripe experience. For 21 years he devoted the best of his life's energies to the work there. He was interested in the developments at Ingleside and Panthersville, giving encouragement and oversight. He contended for personal integrity, and for the integrity of the Word of God, which he set forth in its fullness. He was esteemed and loved as a pastor. His counsel was sought by Presbytery, by its committees, and by the educational institutions in Decatur. His personal piety was their blessing. He did much to enlarge the influence of the Decatur Church in the life of the Presbytery.

This brief story of a quarter-century shows a remarkable growth in Presbyterianism in the city of Atlanta. Here the foundation was laid for a greatly enlarged influence, which has reached out into the church, into educational enterprises, into Home Missions, and into missions to the uttermost parts of the earth.

66. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Dec. 30, 1912.

67. Ibid.—Apr. 14, 1915.

68. *Sketch of East Point Church*, Mrs. J. T. Livsey.

VI

Expansion



3. AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE

THE compass of this volume will not permit a full story of Agnes Scott College. Dr. Frank H. Gaines and Dr. J. R. McCain have written the *Story of Agnes Scott* in admirable form in two sections.¹ Yet, no effort to tell the story of the Presbytery of Atlanta would be complete without some reference to the institution, and to those origins out of which it grew. Such reference cannot confine itself to any one designated period in the unfolding story of the Presbytery. The matter in this chapter is largely derived from the records of the above-mentioned men, and so fully have both of them given themselves to Agnes Scott College that its story is in reality the story of their lives and labors.

Frank Henry Gaines had at first studied medicine before he was turned to the ministry as his life work. After his experience of the first twelve years in the ministry, largely in Virginia, the church at Decatur deemed him a man of unusual gifts and fine soul, and called him to lead them as pastor.² He came to the town of Decatur in December, 1888 when he was 37 years of age, and when the population of the town was about 1,000 persons, and when the only mode of public transportation was the Georgia Railroad. After arrival in his new field he became very much concerned because of the inadequate educational opportunity afforded the youth. So greatly did it weigh upon his heart that he was moved to

1. F. H. Gaines, *Story of Agnes Scott*; J. R. McCain, *Story of Agnes Scott*.
2. *Ministerial Directory* (see F. H. Gaines).

reveal his feeling to some of the leadership of the church. This concern appeared general also in the minds of these men, and a meeting of officers of the Decatur Church was called in the pastor's study on July 17, 1889. Out of the discussion at this meeting Agnes Scott College was born. It would be well at this point and before further details are given to quote from Dr. McCain's foreword concerning Dr. Gaines:

Except in the matter of erecting the first building, he has planned all the important steps in its development. He has shown a rare genius in selecting capable teachers and officers who could work out the ideals which he held. His ability, determination and faith in God have enabled him to triumph over obstacles which could have appalled most others. It is he who through all the years has made the institution . . . I do not know in all the educational history of the country of another such experience as he had. Under a single administration Agnes Scott has passed through all the stages from an elementary school to a high school, then to an institute, and finally to a college of the highest rank.³

We shall return to that first meeting at the manse. Those present were Rev. F. H. Gaines, G. W. Scott, Milton A. Candler, Dr. Robert C. Word, Jas. W. Kirkpatrick, J. A. Mason, John B. Swanton, George A. Ramspeck, B. S. Crane, and H. J. Williams. A resolution of great import and few words was offered by Mr. Scott: "Resolved that we determine to establish at once a school of high character." It was enthusiastically adopted, and plans made "at once." The town was to be canvassed to discover the probable number of pupils. A search was to be made for teachers. A suitable house was to be located. Five days later the group assembled to learn that a canvass had been made and that at least 39 pupils were in prospect. A charter was presented and the budding institution called the "Decatur Female Seminary." After another five days the group met again to report progress and to perfect details. On August 24, Mr. Gaines announced that Miss Nannette Hopkins had been secured as principal at an annual salary of \$600 and Miss Mattie Cook as assistant at the salary of \$400 annually. Thus far all steps had been taken in faith alone. With teachers engaged and housing provided, there was needed an assurance of financial support. Capital stock of \$5,000 was issued in units of \$50.00 each. There were 35 subscribers, of whom it should be noted that Mr. G. W. Scott subscribed \$2,000 and Mr. M. A. Candler \$500, these two men providing half the total. The remainder was provided in

3. Explanation in *Story of Agnes Scott* by J. R. McCain.

smaller amounts by the other thirty-three subscribers. Attention has been centered upon these two men because in a peculiar sense they along with Dr. Gaines and their common faith in God carried the financial destiny of the school. Of special significance was the "prayer covenant" entered upon by these three men that they would pray daily for the welfare of the school. As the patrons of the school conceived it, it was to be a Presbyterian school. Five trustees were contemplated, all of whom were to be active members of the Presbyterian Church. Mr. Gaines, Pastor of Decatur Church, was to be ex-officio member of the Board and its chairman. The Session of Decatur Church was to elect two of its members as trustees, and this they did on August 28, naming Mr. C. M. Candler and Mr. B. S. Crane. The stockholders chose the other two, namely, Mr. G. W. Scott and Dr. E. H. Barnett, the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta. In this paragraph, three persons have been named of whom it may be said that the success of the venture depended upon them: Dr. Gaines for his vision and aggressive leadership and determination, Mr. G. W. Scott for his devotion and benefaction, and Miss Hopkins for her fine ability as principal and teacher, with the capacity to fit into each changing situation of a developing school.

The first session of the school opened on September 24, 1889 with Miss Hopkins and Miss Cook in charge. They added to the teaching staff two young ladies from Decatur, Miss Fannie Pratt to teach Piano, and Miss Valeria Fraser to teach Art and Calisthenics. At the beginning there was a wide range in ages and some irregularity in attendance, with withdrawals and readmissions. However, by the close of the year, 60 girls had been enrolled along with seven small boys.⁴ Apparently, boys were admitted the first year only. So acceptable and efficient was the leadership given by Miss Hopkins, that the school found ready approval among its patrons, and its continuance was assured. Preparations were made for a second session on an enlarged scale. It must be remembered that this first session provided only elementary and grammar grades, but it set the aims and standards and character of the school, which have been followed and developed throughout the ensuing years. The first printed catalog set forth the total annual cost for board and tuition of a pupil at \$185.00. Day pupils paid \$9.00, \$12.00, and \$15.00 per quarter according to grade. Extra charges were made for Music and Art. A very full and detailed set of rules is

4. First Catalog of Agnes Scott Institute.

printed in the catalog, relating to discipline, personal conduct, dress, health, religious observances, and male visitors. "Boarders are to attend church each Sabbath morning when the weather is not too inclement, under the charge of the resident teacher."⁵

The second year was also significant. Toward the close of the first session, Mr. G. W. Scott invited Mr. Gaines to his home, and made this announcement: "Mr. Gaines, the Lord has greatly prospered me in my business and I don't want it to harden my heart. I have decided to give \$40,000 to provide a home for the school." The only condition attached was that it be named for his mother. She was born in Ireland but had come to make her home in Pennsylvania. Thenceforth the school carried the name, "Agnes Scott Institute." Mr. Scott, in the interest of the building, traveled to many parts of the country to observe other schools and to provide the very best equipment possible. He provided five acres of land upon which to build and gave special oversight to the building. As building progressed, the ideas were improved and enlarged, advancing the cost ultimately to about \$82,000, all of which Mr. Scott provided. The building, now the Main Building at the center of the campus, was under construction during the second session of the school, and was completed during 1891. It was formally dedicated on November 12, during a meeting of the Synod of Georgia which was held in Decatur. The faculty was enlarged and Mr. Gaines himself regularly taught a course in Bible. It was at this point that the purposes of the school took form in the Agnes Scott Ideal, which was placed in print for distribution. This Ideal has stood through the years, and has guided the trustees and faculty in all their decisions. It is expressed in six points: (1) a liberal education fully abreast of the best institutions of the country; (2) the Bible a text-book; (3) thoroughly qualified and consecrated teachers; (4) a high standard of scholarship; (5) all the influences of the college conducive to the formation and development of Christian character; (6) the glory of God, the chief end of all.

The enrollment increased rapidly, numbering 138 the second year and 292 the third year.⁶ This large increase in attendance brought increased operating expenses. The income did not keep step with the expense, leaving an indebtedness each year. But each year Mr. Scott came to the rescue, and the deficits absorbed by him during the first six years amounted to a total sum of about \$30,000.

5. Ibid.

6. See 2nd and 3rd Catalogs.

Including the purchase of additional land and buildings, it may be estimated that Mr. Scott contributed as much as \$175,000 to Agnes Scott. The responsibility for leadership demanded more effort than Mr. Gaines, with his pastorate, was able to put forth. The Board of Trustees, therefore, sent Mr. Scott and Dr. Strickler to urge upon Mr. Gaines the devotion of his entire time to the school. He resigned his pastorate, the charter was amended, and the school was reorganized. At that time the Board of Trustees became self-perpetuating, and the Decatur Church surrendered its right to name trustees. However, that article of the charter was retained which required each member of the board to be a Presbyterian. The distinction was made: "It is under Presbyterian control—not ecclesiastical control." Agnes Scott Institute became Agnes Scott Academy.

Steps in the enlargement of the curriculum were taken from time to time. For the third session some high school courses were added. Slowly the grade of the school was lifted by discontinuing the lowest years and adding higher years. By the year 1905, all the courses of college had been added, and all the classes under high school, or college preparatory, were discontinued. With the close of the session of 1912-13, all high school courses were discontinued, and Agnes Scott became a full grown college. There followed the coveted recognition by the National Association, and the interest of the General Education Board.

Space will not permit details concerning the building of an endowment. There was the first campaign in 1899, when the sum of \$100,000 was sought. Friends had helped and given encouragement, and the cause was presented to the Synod of Georgia at its meeting in Marietta, where the Synod "heartily endorsed the movement." It made this declaration:

We feel that we can confidently assert that at no other school in or near our state can the girls in our Presbyterian homes find better advantages in all that constitutes a good Christian school than in this the only Presbyterian school in the state of Georgia.⁷

A substantial sum was subscribed by individuals at this meeting, which greatly heartened those who led the campaign. Through the years that have followed, by earnest effort and much devotion, this endowment has been increased until it stands at nearly \$8,750,000. This has been accomplished not through direct support from church bodies, but by the general appeal to friends. The grounds and

7. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1899, p. 15.

buildings have been consistently enlarged until the campus covers approximately 50 acres, and the value of them all is estimated at \$5,205,000.

A great Christian school must inevitably be the product of devoted Christian souls moved by the Spirit of God. There has been a worthy list of men who have served through the years as chairmen of the Board of Trustees: Dr. Frank Gaines, George W. Scott, George B. Scott, S. P. Inman, J. K. Orr, C. M. Candler and George Winship. There has been the splendid corps of teachers, who must remain unnamed, but who make all other plans effective. Miss Hopkins served for 50 years from the first beginning; Miss Louise McKinney for 46 years. To Mr. H. B. Arbuckle, who served also as an elder of the Decatur Church, must be given large credit for developing the initial curriculum. Note is also taken of Mr. S. G. Stukes for long and valued service as Dean.

In 1915, there came to the staff of the institution James Ross McCain, a young man of pronounced Christian conviction, reared in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church and with some experience in law. From the beginning he assumed a variety of duties, later becoming a member of the Board and Vice President. After a full span of service, Dr. Gaines was called away from the scene of his earthly labors in 1923, and the Board turned to Dr. McCain to serve as acting-President and later confirmed him as President. He was a worthy successor to Dr. Gaines. He has proved an able administrator and he has demonstrated a wide knowledge in the field of education. Everywhere he has won friends for the school. By his character he has inspired high ideals, and by his Christian life he has won the confidence of all who know him. His vision and determination have left as his monument an enlarged school of the highest standing. His recent retirement has brought to the head of the college Dr. Wallace M. Alston who manifests all those qualities which assure him a worthy place in the succession of presidents.

This school, first conceived in a pastor's study approximately seventy years ago, has become the realization of the unfolding dreams of godly men and women. It has always maintained its quiet confidence in the great possibilities of trained Christian women for Christ and his church. During the intervening years 9,900 young women have been in attendance from many states throughout the nation, and from many countries of the world. There are now 3,650 living graduates. Who can estimate the combined influence of these women—in home, in school, in state and in church? Who can

measure the effect upon all fields of life of the applied Christian truth learned upon the campus of Agnes Scott College? Only God can determine how truly the school has served its chief end—the glory of God.

VI

Expansion



4. DONALD FRASER HIGH SCHOOL

WITH the coming of Rev. Frank Gaines to Decatur, the matter of the education of young women came to the front. A Female Seminary was incorporated in late 1889.¹ A similar pattern was adopted for a boys' school and incorporated in May 1892, under the name of the "Donald Fraser High School" "for the moral and intellectual training and education of Boys."² This charter provided that all the Trustees should be Presbyterian and that the Pastor of the Decatur Church should be ex-officio member and chairman.³ The Trustees were J. C. Kirkpatrick, Frank J. Ansley, G. B. Scott, W. J. Houston, M. A. Candler and Rev. F. H. Gaines.⁴ Mr. E. R. Leyburn had conducted a school for boys one year previous to the incorporation, but had left to pursue his studies for the ministry.⁵ The Board then undertook to gather a teaching staff, and the first annual session of the school began in the fall of 1892.⁶ The Board enlisted Mr. G. Holman Gardner of Rogersville, Tenn. to undertake the task. Mr. Gardner was a graduate of Hampden Sidney College, and of devout Christian life. Immediately, he transferred his church membership to the Decatur Church⁶ where he became an active Elder. The Decatur Church had but recently erected its new building at the

1. See Section VI, Chapter 3.
2. See Charter in DeKalb County Courthouse.
3. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1896, p. 16.
4. Sessional Records of Decatur Church—May 4, 1894.
5. Statement of Rev. E. R. Leyburn.
6. Sessional Records of Decatur Church—Nov. 19, 1892.

corner of Sycamore and Church Streets, leaving the old property idle.⁷ The Trustees therefore purchased the property in 1892, and arranged it for a school building.⁸ The building stood upon a two-acre tract facing Williams Street in Decatur and extended from Church to Clairmont, and the whole was purchased for \$4,000.⁹ The building had been erected in 1845,¹⁰ but was in good state of preservation. It was re-arranged for school purposes and was equipped with the necessary furniture. Water was obtained from a well which for years had its place on the property.¹¹

Upon Mr. Gardner along with the Trustees fell the responsibility of setting the standards for the school. These standards were later set forth in a catalog, as follows: "The chief aim of this school is to give young men that preparation for college which will enable them to take an honorable part in its duties, and to grapple successfully with the great questions which necessarily confront college students," "this school takes only a limited number of students, and thus is able to give each one much personal individual attention."¹² Again this statement is found: "The development of Christian character is the chief aim of this school."¹³ Mr. Gardner induced his friend and former school mate at Hampden Sidney, Mr. C. D. McKinney, to join him in the work, and to become co-principal of Donald Fraser.¹⁴

The school undertook to serve boys of all ages from the age of eight upward, and was at the first more than a high school.¹⁵ There were three departments: (a) a Primary Department (ages 8-12); (b) an Intermediate Department (ages 12-15); and (c) an Advanced Department which was the college preparatory department.¹⁵ Mr. Gardner's mother, Mrs. Sue Gardner directed the Primary department.¹⁶ For entrance in the lowest class of the Advanced Department, the candidate was required to pass an examination in English, History of the United States, and Arithmetic.¹⁷ From the beginning the very highest grade of work was required.

7. Candler, *History of Decatur Church*.

8. Court Record, DeKalb County.

9. Sessional Record of Decatur Church—Apr. 11, 1892.

10. Ibid. (Historical Sketch at opening of record).

11. See picture in Catalog.

12. Catalog—1900-1.

13. Catalog—1904-5.

14. Statement of Mr. C. D. McKinney, Decatur, Ga.

15. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1902, p. 25.

16. Statement of Mr. C. D. McKinney, Decatur, Ga.

17 and 18. Catalog—1900-1.

In Arithmetic, the courses covered were Algebra, Geometry, and Trigonometry. Latin courses led through Virgil, and Cicero's Orations. English studies included Grammar, Literature, Composition, and Declamation. Physics, Physical Geography and Physiology provided the field of Science. Greek and German were also offered in the field of Language. Study of the Bible was always a part of the curriculum, and courses were offered including Foster's Story of the Bible, Smith's Old Testament History, Hurlbut's Four Gospels, and Stalker's lives of Christ and Paul.¹⁸ It is recorded that the first of these courses was most popular with the boys, and proved a real asset to the school.¹⁹ So well did the school perform its work that its certificates were accepted at the University of Georgia, Emory, Hampden Sidney and Washington and Lee.²⁰ The growth of the school was marked, and after ten years all the lower departments were discontinued, so that the school was a high school only.²¹

At the first there was no dormitory. Board was to be had in the town at the rate of \$16 to \$18 per month in private homes.²² Tuition per session (38 weeks) was \$50 payable in advance. With the growth in popularity, the tuition was advanced to \$40 for each of two terms. Growth in the number of boarding pupils, and the difficulty in obtaining homes, led Mr. Gardner to proceed to the erection at the cost of \$5,000²³ of a dormitory of 14 rooms, as a private venture.²⁴ This building stood on the west side of Clairmont about midway between West Alley and the Courthouse Square, and Mr. Gardner's wife operated the dormitory.²⁵ About the time that Donald Fraser School came into being, the long standing financial account of old Oglethorpe was adjusted, and there was a sum of about \$3,200 in the treasury of Synod.²⁶ By an adjustment of the charter which gave the Synod of Georgia representation upon the Board of Trustees, the Synod was prevailed upon to invest that \$3,200 in the stock of Donald Fraser.²⁷ With those funds a four-room addition was built at the rear of the school building, greatly enlarging the facilities of the school. The school seems to have been entirely self-supporting,²⁸ and did not call upon the church for special offerings. So successful was the administration of the prin-

19. Statement of Mr. C. D. McKinney, Decatur, Ga.

20. Catalog 1900-1.

21. Catalog 1904-5.

22. Catalog 1900-1.

23. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—April 16, 1904, p. 39.

24 and 25. Statement of Mr. C. D. McKinney, Decatur, Ga.

26 and 27. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1898, p. 26.

28. Ibid.—1902, p. 25.

cipal and faculty, and so careful their management, that without burden to the patrons a frame building, about 30 by 50 feet, was erected on the lot at the right and to the rear of the school building, at the approximate cost of \$600.²⁹

Christian training was regarded as of the utmost importance. Each daily session was opened with a morning devotional, consisting of a Scripture reading and prayer. All boarding students were required to attend church service on Sunday forenoon.³⁰ Decatur Church was concerned for the salvation of the students of Donald Fraser and Agnes Scott, and records of 1899 show the conversion of 3 Donald Fraser boys and 14 Agnes Scott girls.³¹ In Mr. Gardner's home which could care for about 15 boys, he tried to provide an ideal home life. Each evening after supper there was family prayer. Mr. Gardner's thought was to "surround the boy with the best moral and social influences at a time when he most needs them."³² There were necessarily certain rules which were deemed necessary. No student was allowed to go more than a mile from Decatur without special permission. Going out at night was also forbidden except by special permission. It was against rules to use tobacco, to contract debts, to use profane or obscene language, to possess fire-arms, or to expend money recklessly.³³

Former students of Donald Fraser appear on the list of elders in the Decatur Church in the names of Scott, Candler, Rountree and Muse. The list of those who served on the faculty show wise choice by the Trustees and Principals. A number of these faculty members have filled honorable places in the ministry of the church, namely, E. R. Leyburn, Henry Edmonds, Twyman Williams, Ben R. Lacy, Robert King, O. E. Buchholz, Henry Bedinger, and L. T. Wilds. Some have served in public life, including Chas. D. McKinney and Scott Candler. Others might be mentioned, such as, Vernon Kennedy, Sandy Beaver, Rudolph Guder, Thos. J. Farrar and Lockwood Barr. Dr. Joseph Green was the school physician.³⁴ Of these teachers nearly all were Presbyterian men.³⁵ The school from the beginning operated on the honor system. The enrollment varied from 45 at the first registration to about 85 in the most prosperous

29. Ibid.—1902, p. 33.

30. Catalog 1900-1.

31. Sessional Records of the Decatur Church—Mar. 12, 1899.

32. Catalog—1904-5.

33. Catalog—1900-1.

34. See various catalogs and minutes.

35. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1902, p. 33.

days. About the year 1907, military discipline was introduced.³⁶

The development of a more adequate public school system in Atlanta, Decatur and elsewhere, tended to draw off the patronage. At the same time, the Synod of Georgia had conceived the idea of developing a Synodical College, and negotiations were entered upon to develop Donald Fraser into such a school, with the possibility even of changing the location. These plans found very little support, and were later abandoned.³⁶ The school was later placed in the hands of the City of Decatur, which continued the school for about three years, as a part of the public school system. For about three years more Mr. Paul King operated a private school.³⁸ Then the school was closed. The property was sold to liquidate certain indebtedness which had been incurred in the later years. From the proceeds there was returned to the Synod of Georgia the old Oglethorpe Fund, which seems to have been reinvested by the Synod of Georgia in its educational program,³⁹ particularly the Synod's School at Tiger, Ga.

Thus for about twenty years, a Christian High School of excellent standards led by able men of high character blessed Decatur and vicinity, and reached in influence out into the state and even beyond its limits. Youth was directed at a critical period. Wholesome high school opportunities were offered to those to whom it might otherwise have been denied, and Christian character was developed to bless the church, the professions and the business world.

36. Ibid.—1907, p. 23.

37. Ibid.—1908-11.

38. Statement of Mr. Scott Candler, Decatur, Ga.

39. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1921, p. 53.

VI

Expansion



5. PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL

REV. A. R. HOLDERBY, a native of Virginia, a veteran of four years service in the War Between the States, and a minister of twenty-one years of service in the church, was called to become the pastor of the Third (Moore Memorial) Church of Atlanta. He had been concerned about the welfare of the bodies of people as well as their souls. Upon arrival in Atlanta he seized the opportunity, along with the duties of his church, to pursue also the study of medicine, even at the age of 51.¹ This afforded him the opportunity of ministering to his flock in a two-fold way. He conducted a small clinic from his church, but his resources and the resources of his church were too limited for a wide exercise of the healing ministry. The thought of a Presbyterian Hospital was born in his mind. Gaining the interest and support of a number of ministers and elders, he took the initial steps and obtained a charter of incorporation on April 11, 1901, with the following men as Trustees: A. R. Holderby, R. O. Flinn, J. G. Patton, C. P. Bridewell, G. W. Bull, W. H. Frazer, J. McF. Gaston, Jr., John A. Whitner, John C. Whitner, W. H. Hughes, C. D. Montgomery, W. Woods White, and R. M. Clayton. The corporate name was "The Presbyterian Hospital of Atlanta." "The object of this association and incorporation is for benevolent and charitable purposes . . . not for individual pecuniary gain." "The particular business of said cor-

1. *Ministerial Directory* (see A. R. Holderby).

poration shall be the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a hospital or hospitals, and one or more branch dispensaries, in said county, for the purpose of healing the sick, diseased, and infirm generally, and for administering medical, surgical, and other like appropriate skill to human ills." Of the Trustees, "They further desire the power to conduct in connection with, and as a part of, said hospital, a training school for nurses, and to issue, to those attending such school, diplomas or other testimonials certifying their proficiency in the course prescribed."² There was organized in connection with the hospital an Auxiliary of women, who became very active in cooperating with and promoting the interest of the hospital.³ The interested group was to be disappointed more than once in the selection of a site. In May 1901, the Trustees were prepared to sign a lease for the Elsworth property at 326 Simpson Street. As soon as the announcement was made, the neighbors protested the location of a hospital, and the site was abandoned.⁴ By June, a second site was approved, at 82 Central Place, and steps were taken to prepare the building and have it in readiness, if possible, on July 1. This building was a two-story brick building of 26 rooms, with a basement in addition. This would provide the space for 30 beds, which had already been subscribed, and for the nurses' training school.⁵ The formal opening took place on Monday afternoon, July 1, and the hospital became a reality. There was prayer, and there were addresses. The building was thrown open for inspection of the newly decorated quarters, of the equipment, and of the beds dressed in white linens. Visiting friends met the staff. Dr. F. M. Sutton was the House Physician; Miss Susie B. Cunyus was the Superintendent of Nurses, coming from Nashville. Twelve patients were received for care on Tuesday.⁶ The first response was the endowment of rooms by several individuals, and one by the ladies of the First Church in memory of their recently departed pastor, Dr. Barnett.⁷ At its first meeting the Synod called attention to the Hospital, and appointed visitors to keep the Synod informed.⁸ Later the Presbytery appointed Rev. J. G. Herndon of LaGrange to become chairman of a group of visitors from the

2. See Charter at Fulton County Courthouse.

3. *Atlanta Journal*—July 2, 1901.

4. *Atlanta Journal*—May 10, 1901; May 17, 1901.

5. *Ibid.*—June 4, 1901.

6. *Ibid.*—June 29, 1901.

7. *Ibid.*—July 2, 1901.

8. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1901.

Presbytery.⁹ Each day a time was set for a time of worship for all who wished to be present.¹⁰ After four years, there had been reported as many as 25 conversions.¹¹ In 1904, the Hospital was moved from its location on Central Place to one at 64 Walton Street. At this time Dr. Marion McH. Hull was listed as Superintendent.¹² There were 30 beds, and 16 visiting doctors and assistants. No patient was turned away for the want of funds.¹³ The Hospital was proving too small, and plans were being developed for the obtaining of equipment and for an enlarged program. The Synod was impressed and was prepared along with the Presbyteries to assume control and responsibility.¹⁴ During the first four years 1,000 patients were admitted and treated, and 1,200 patients had been treated outside the Hospital. There were 18 nurses in training, and the annual expenses amounted to \$10,000.¹⁵

By 1907 the Hospital services had grown still further, and a new location was leased at 17 West Cain Street.¹⁶ Expenses were advancing and income was small. For one year the receipts from fees was \$13,784, from donations \$2,655, and from loans from physicians \$1,275.¹⁷ It should be noted that the institution was beginning to become insolvent. The Synod reported that approximately half the patients were charity cases.¹⁸ Increased expenses of the enlarged program incurred increasing debt. In desperation the trustees and the administration called upon the church. The beds were occupied by patients who needed care; the pantry was empty and the credit of the institution was poor. A mass-meeting of interested friends was called for November 8, 1908 at the First Presbyterian Church to consider the plight.¹⁹ It was reported at the meeting that in the seven years of operation 3,500 patients had been treated, of whom 1,600 were charity patients. Gifts of \$16,000 had been contributed, and 25 nurses had been graduated.²⁰ The meeting was called upon to furnish funds to relieve the emergency, and steps were taken to

9. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 8, 1903, p. 7.

10. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1904, p. 28.

11. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—April 14, 1905, p. 37.

12. Atlanta City Directory—1904.

13. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1904, p. 28.

14. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1905, p. 21.

15. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—April 14, 1905, p. 37.

16. Atlanta City Directory—1907.

17. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1906, p. 24.

18. Ibid.—1908, p. 13.

19. Ibid.—1908, p. 13 (statement by Mr. C. D. McKinney, Decatur, Ga.).

20. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1908, p. 13.

develop a maintenance fund to provide against future emergencies.²¹ It was necessary also to consider the welfare of the nurses who had enrolled for training. A discouraged group, upon the verge of bankruptcy, went away from the meeting with new hope. So high were the hopes that plans were proposed for the purchase of a site, and solicitation made for capital funds. A site was chosen on Boulevard, and an enlarged hospital was envisioned.²² Again protest was made by neighbors, and this seems greatly to have discouraged the movement. Dr. S. R. Preston gave some months to the solving of the difficulties and to the solicitation of funds.²³ The contributions from representative citizens were in too small amounts to meet the conditional total sought, and the campaign was abandoned. It is to be said to the credit of the Trustees and the administration, and to the Presbyterians of the city, that all debts incurred were fully discharged. The nurses were cared for, and those who were still in training in 1911 when the Hospital closed were transferred by agreement to other institutions to complete their training.²⁴

Three Presbyterian physicians deserve special mention because of their interest and loyalty: Dr. S. D. Barnett, Dr. C. W. Strickler, and Dr. M. McH. Hull.²⁵ They gave liberally of their services, their funds and their devotion. Mr. Chas. D. McKinney, who was a member of the Board at the end, was greatly responsible for guiding the Hospital to an honorable end. Among the superintending nurses were Miss A. L. Rutherford,²⁶ Miss M. C. Applegood,²⁷ Miss Annie Hamilton,²⁸ and Miss A. B. Feebeck.²⁹

A noble venture was undertaken, which in its smaller scope was well executed, but as it grew in size and service, called for financial support beyond the strength and liberality of those to whom the call came. Suffering was relieved; the infirm were comforted; and many of the diseased found cure. A testimony to the Lord Christ was given, in whose name the ministry was offered. Friends found expression for a fine human sympathy. A fine service was rendered during a period of ten years, and burdens were made lighter for

21. *Ibid.*—1908, p. 13 (statement of Mr. C. D. McKinney, Decatur, Ga.).

22. Mr. McKinney states that the desired property on Boulevard was known as the Nelson property.

23. Statement of Mr. C. D. McKinney, Decatur, Ga.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.* (see also Atlanta City Directory—1904).

26. Atlanta City Directory—1907.

27. *Ibid.*—1908.

28. *Ibid.*—1909.

29. Statement of Mr. C. D. McKinney, Decatur, Ga.

many. The regret abides that such a service might not have been continued.

VI

Expansion



6. SISTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES

THE Unity of the Church has been accepted as a cardinal principle of the Presbyterian Church from the beginning. Relations with all other churches have been influenced by this conception. It has meant the recognition of sister churches, and of the standing of their members. Members are dismissed to other evangelical denominations, and are received from them without further rites. Upon their own standing, members of other churches are invited to share in the sacraments, and ministers of other denominations are given full recognition as brother Christian ministers.

On the other hand there has been a closer relation between various branches of the Presbyterian Church. They all subscribe to one set of doctrinal standards, namely, the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. They all acknowledge the unity of the church. Their church life is under a representative government in a series of church courts, the authority being vested in the courts and not in the individuals. Church officers and pastors are chosen by the vote of the people. Equal vote is accorded Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders (ministers) in the courts of the church. Children of believers are included in the membership of the church. Because they share in this common tradition, in this common confession of faith and in this common form of government, other Presbyterian groups in our area will be noted.

During early settlement the small groups of members which had gathered together felt a sense of weakness and isolation. They

sought the encouragement and fellowship of other likeminded people. Both Congregational and Presbyterian missionaries led their churches into Presbytery,¹ and as a result Congregationalism was never strong in North Georgia. Persons designated as "Associate" or "Seceder" Presbyterians were being received into the young churches.² Thus at the first all were merged into one Presbyterian Church.

ASSOCIATE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The first separate existence of another distinct Presbyterian group was seen in the Associate Reformed Church. At several points the members from that branch were numerous enough to form a church of their own. In the northern part of DeKalb County, Prosperity Church appeared in the 30's,³ and has continued till the present day. Prosperity Cemetery still exists, but the church was moved to the settlement along the new railroad, and took the name of the town—Doraville.⁴ There seems to have been little association between Doraville Church and the Presbytery of Atlanta, which may be accounted for merely by geographical location.

About this same time a group of Psalm-singing Presbyterians moved into Coweta County and were organized, along with other Presbyterians into the White Oak Church⁵ This church, composed of two groups of Presbyterians, was connected with the Presbytery of Flint River, and was served by Rev. J. Y. Alexander.⁶ Differences, however, arose in the church, and in 1848 the Associate Reformed group withdrew and organized separately and called another minister, still worshiping in the same building but holding their services on different Sabbaths.⁷ The White Oak Church (A.R.P.) is still in existence at the original location. The section belonging to the Presbytery of Flint River moved to the town of Turin.⁸

Another group which entered the area was composed of people

1. See Section I, Chapter.

2. Sessional Records of Smyrna Church—July 10, 1841; Sessional Records of Fairview Church—Mar. 20, 1830.

3. August 11, 1836, *Centennial History Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church*.

4. Ibid.

5. Jones, *Coweta County Chronicles*—1830.

6. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Mar. 1, 1838.

7. Jones, *Coweta Chronicles*—1847 (*Centennial History A.R.P. Church*).

8. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 13, 1888.

in Newton County. They were organized as Hopewell Church.⁹ These three Associate Reformed Churches experienced early prosperity, as may be judged by the stones in the cemeteries and by some of the remaining homes, but being rural churches, they felt the effect of removals of population. White Oak and Hopewell Churches have sent members into nearby churches of Atlanta Presbytery, namely Newnan and Covington churches respectively,¹⁰ and these members greatly strengthened those churches.

The movement of Doraville was toward Atlanta. As a result, sufficient members gathered to organize a church in Atlanta. This took place in the early 90's.¹¹ As early as the year 1894, Rev. O. Y. Bonner of the Associate Reformed Church was a visitor to the Presbytery of Atlanta.¹²

The first church building in Atlanta was at the corner of Loyd and Garnett Streets, and was dedicated February 2, 1896.¹³ The second building was at the corner of Whitehall Street and Whitehall Terrace.¹⁴ The present building at the corner of Highland Avenue and Hudson Drive is the third building. In recent years under the pastoral leadership of the Rev. Thomas H. McDill, the church has shown remarkable growth. A new colony was in turn sponsored on Candler Road and was known as the Candler Road Church.¹⁵ Later this became the McElroy Memorial Church. Mention is also made of the church at Tucker¹⁶ (formerly Antioch).¹⁷

The entrance of the Associate Reformed Church grew out of a movement of Scotch-Irish people from Ireland by way of South Carolina into Georgia, coming by way of Abbeville, Newberry and Laurens Districts. They were a Psalm-singing people, and they brought with them their high conception of the Sabbath. They were in general an industrious and thrifty people, with a deep religious faith and high moral character. The number of their churches in this area is small, and so, many of their sons and daughters, in their removals have been lost to their church, but have enriched many of the churches of the Presbytery of Atlanta. In recent years the church has modified its distinctive position as to Psalm-singing,¹⁸

9. Organized July 25, 1830 (Centennial History).

10. See Sessional Records of Newnan and Covington Churches.

11. Organized 1891 (Centennial History).

12. Minutes Atlanta Presbytery—Apr. 14, 1894.

13. *Atlanta Journal*—Feb. 1, 1896.

14. Atlanta City Directory—1909.

15 and 16. Minutes of the A.R.P. Synod—1951.

17. Centennial History of Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

18. Minutes of the A.R.P. Synod—May 1947.

and one wonders sometimes as to the reason for continued separate existence. Within the Atlanta area so close has been the association between the two churches that a stranger would not be aware that there was a separate denominational connection.

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

(Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.)

In the *Atlanta Journal* of May 28, 1901, there appeared an announcement that the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was making plans to enter Atlanta. It was not the first thought of the kind that had come to the Cumberland Church, for as early as 1874 it had sent to Atlanta the Rev. W. H. Crawford to begin work. Within a few weeks he had gathered a small membership of eight persons. After about two years that membership had grown to about 30.¹⁹ Mr. Crawford found a friendly welcome from the Presbytery of Atlanta, to which body he was introduced as a visitor in June 1876.²⁰ Growth was slow and financial support meager, which led to the abandonment of the work.

Nothing further seems to have been done until the year 1900, when the Mission Board saw in the growing city a new opportunity. Accordingly steps were taken to make a new study. The Rev. George H. Mack was sent to Atlanta to begin work anew. He had only recently been graduated from Lebanon Seminary, and came to begin his ministry.²¹ In the Y.M.C.A. building on June 2, 1901, he held his first service. The Synod of Tennessee supported his work financially and about \$11,000 was procured for a building. In the fall of 1902 a special series of services was held in a tent at a lot on Baker Street, where it had been planned to erect a building.²¹ At the close of this series of services they were ready for the organization of a church, and through the thoughtfulness of Dr. R. O. Flinn the use of the North Avenue Church building was tendered for the occasion.²² There the first Cumberland Presbyterian Church was organized on September 19 with 56 members. Its first building was erected at the corner of Harris Street and Spring.²¹

In the year 1907, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. completed negotiations which had been under way for some time, and the two churches were united,

19. 20th Anniversary Brochure of Covenant Presbyterian Church.

20. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—June 7, 1876.

21. 20th Anniversary Brochure of Covenant Presbyterian Church.

taking the name of the latter. The First Cumberland Church of Atlanta had made a new connection and needed a new name. Thenceforth it was known as the Harris Street Presbyterian Church.²¹ Friendly relations were maintained between the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. and the Presbyterian Church, U.S., and along with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, they shared in common efforts for Presbyterianism. It was their joint effort which brought the four General Assembly meetings to Atlanta in 1913.

Rev. W. A. Eisenhart came to Atlanta in 1924, and encouraged the removal of the church from the district where business was pressing in to an area where residential construction was increasing. The result was the erection of the church building on Peachtree Street and Terrace Drive. That again required a new name, whereupon the present name of Covenant was chosen. Dr. Herman L. Turner came to the church in 1930, and but a few years ago observed his twenty-fifth anniversary. These three decades have shown a large growth and development in the church, bringing the membership to about 1,000.²² Dr. Turner has found a most useful place in the life of the city of Atlanta, and by his own fraternal attitude has not only made his contribution to the total life of Presbyterianism in the city, but has also led his church to take its part. Here again we find that the sister churches are Presbyterians together, engaged in a common task, but owning separate Assembly connections.

This brief reference to the sister denominations may well indicate the sense of a common heritage, a common confession, and a common task. Working side by side in a world which needs what all can do, the churches have shared together the Lord's work. They have met in Presbytery together.²⁴ They have been one in evangelistic efforts,²⁵ one in training tasks, and cordial in their consideration one for the other. Their officers have shared a common fellowship.²⁶ "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

22. Bulletin of North Avenue Presbyterian Church—Sept. 12, 1909.

23. 20th Anniversary Brochure of Covenant Presbyterian Church.

24. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Fall 1949.

25. Thompson, *Atlanta School of Home Visitation Evangelism*.

26. See Roster of Presbyterian Officers—1950.

VI

Expansion



7. EXPERIENCE IN UNITED ACTION

THE first quarter century after the establishment of the Presbytery of Atlanta had been a period of survival. People had been trying to rebuild what had been destroyed. Churches had been trying to recover a lost life, and many of them did not succeed. Their endeavors were mainly individual endeavors in the particular churches. Their common life had been concern for missions and for education, and with their constitution and their discipline. Support of their enterprises was irregular. During the next quarter century, the Presbytery was discovering ways of working together. Churches needed to encourage one another to good works, to learn from the other's experience, and to gain confidence by common action.

The General Assembly had moved the office of its Executive Committee of Home Missions from Baltimore to Atlanta in 1886.¹ The south was growing. The location of its Home Mission Committee should not be in the corner of the territory, but in a central location. It could there be more accessible to the church at large, and face its developing areas. This was the first movement of a central office in the direction of Atlanta. When the Assembly assigned a new location for its committee office, it also appointed to membership on the committee ministers and elders from the Presbytery of Atlanta, and during the entire period of 25 years this continued to be the case. This policy may not have been the wisest

1. Minutes of the General Assembly—1886.

for the church at large, but it broadened the outlook of the Presbytery, and quickened its interest in the work of church extension.

Two items of fact are noted here. In 1899, the Central Church, through Dr. Rice, invited the General Assembly to hold its next meeting at Central.² It was the invitation of the church alone, no record appearing upon the records of Presbytery. The second item has reference to a visit made by Rev. C. O'N. Martindale of Newnan to the Holy Land. Upon his return in 1904, he made a presentation of a gavel to Presbytery, constructed from pieces of wood native to Palestine, and having a suitable inscription.³

The Fall of 1904 saw a Gospel Union Campaign in Atlanta,⁴ supported by Christian laymen and led by Rev. Wilbur Chapman. It received the full support of the Presbyterian and other denominations. It is of interest that no tabernacle was erected. A team of three ministers preceded Dr. Chapman, and introduced the campaign by holding services at three centers. These men were Rev. R. A. Walton, Arthur J. Smith and Daniel S. Toy, the first two being Presbyterian ministers. As the campaign proceeded, other centers were opened using local ministers as speakers. There were also meetings for special groups. Dr. Chapman came after about ten days and held his services at several points. The effort brought widespread interest, and gained much publicity. The experience proved wholesome, and brought many into the Kingdom.⁵ The Presbyterian Churches were working together for Evangelism.

Organized Women's Work in the church awakened the interest of the Presbytery in 1907. Women's societies already existed in many of the churches, there being several in some churches. Their objectives were varied. Some were raising money to assist the minister's support. Some provided special furnishings for the church. Some engaged in a ministry to the poor, and some promoted interest in and raised funds for Foreign Missions. Some were affiliated with the Presbyterian Hospital.⁶ There was little uniformity in effort and each society was guided largely by the prevailing interest of the leaders. New interests often brought into being a new society. The Presbytery, even as was true of the church at large, was cautious about organization of societies within the Presbytery, fearing outside control. Dr. R. O. Flinn became chairman of the Com-

2. Ibid.—1899.

3. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 5, 1904.

4. Ibid.—Oct. 6, 1904.

5. *Atlanta Journal*—Sept. 30, 1904 and following days.

6. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 16, 1909.

mittee on Woman's Work, and studied the plan for an organized women's work.⁷ He discussed the matter with representative leaders among the women, and it was determined to ask Presbytery for the privilege of organizing a Women's Presbyterial Union. After much discussion and some vigorous opposition, Presbytery granted its permission at the Fall meeting of 1907. Then in a meeting in November of the same year at North Avenue Church attended by representatives from 23 churches the Union was formally organized. Plans were made there for a first annual meeting to be held in Newnan on April 8 and 9. In attendance at Newnan were 70 delegates representing 24 out of our 64 churches, and 35 out of 39 women's societies. They reported a total membership of 1,137 women. The first officers of the Union were Mrs. J. S. Thompson, president; Mrs. B. W. Martin of College Park, first vice-president; Miss May Holderby, second vice-president; Mrs. H. W. Sharp, recording secretary; Mrs. B. C. Davis, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. W. M. Everett, treasurer. The plan was to appoint a vice-president in every county where there was a Presbyterian church with a view to enlisting the women in each church and to bring them into accord with the whole program of the church.⁸ The second annual meeting of the Union was held in Covington.⁸ Interest in women's work was strengthened through this organization. Churches were encouraged to develop an organized women's work. In individual societies, interest was awakened in all the causes of the church. Deeper interest was seen throughout the Presbytery. There followed an appeal to Synod to organize a Synodical Union,⁹ and then came the decision of the General Assembly in 1912 to create the "Woman's Auxiliary" of the church.¹⁰ By the year 1915, the word "Union" was disappearing, and the word "Presbyterial" had appeared.¹¹ The Women of the Presbytery were beginning to work together.

This period also revealed the growing popularity of young people's work. At its opening, there was very little offered to the young people outside of the Sabbath School. The Christian Endeavor Society had just been introduced to the South. Church after church had adopted this or a similar plan. The General Assembly through its Publication Committee had developed also the West-

7. *Ibid.*—Apr. 16, 1908.

8. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 16, 1908.

9. *Ibid.*—Apr. 16, 1909.

10. Minutes of the General Assembly—1913, p. 70d.

11. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 13, 1916, p. 30.

minster League, and the Covenanter and Miriam bands.¹² At the turn of the century there were twelve churches reporting societies,¹³ but within fifteen years the number had grown to more than thirty.¹⁴ The churches were learning the value of such societies, and the idea was beginning to prevail that no aggressive church could be without an active young people's group. The young people were finding a place in the church, but as yet there was little opportunity for acquaintance between young people in the different churches.

One interesting venture in cooperative effort came forth from the Presbyterian Ministers' Association of Atlanta, which was already an organized body in 1910.¹⁵ That was the year that the General Assembly anticipated the holding of its Semi-Centennial meeting of 1911 and suggested appropriate observance throughout the year, to reach a climax in May.¹⁶ In the Ministers' Association it was proposed to have a great Jubilee Meeting in the city auditorium, participated in by all the Presbyterians of the city and vicinity. At this meeting it was proposed that some minister of note be invited, and that all the churches forego their own morning services for a great expression of unity. On December 11, 1910, the meeting was held. Dr. James I. Vance, then of Newark, N. J., spoke on "Our Heritage." Special trains brought the congregations from Marietta, Acworth, Decatur, Griffin, Monticello and Jonesboro. The papers gave wide publicity. Agnes Scott College and Georgia Military Academy students came in groups. The platform was reserved for ministers and elders. The Harris Street Church and the Associate Reformed Church joined the effort. The Synod of Georgia sent its Moderator, Rev. G. G. Sydnor of Rome, to represent it on the occasion. An offering was taken for local missions.¹⁷ The paper of the following day stated that there were between 7,000 and 8,000 persons present, adding that it was "the greatest gathering of Presbyterians in the history of the world."¹⁸ Dr. Lingle of the First Church explained its purpose, thus: "First, it was to glorify God, . . . it was to remind Southern Presbyterians of the beginning and growth of their church . . . it was to inspire members of the church by bringing them together in a great gathering."¹⁹

12. Annual Report of the Committee of Publication—1910, p. 24.

13. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 13, 1909.

14. Ibid.—Apr. 16, 1914, p. 50.

16. Minutes of the General Assembly—1910, p. 57.

17. *Atlanta Journal*—Dec. 10-12, 1910.

18. Ibid.—Dec. 12, 1910.

19. Ibid.—Dec. 12, 1910.

The following year, a similar Jubilee occasion brought the Synod of Georgia to meet in Atlanta over the week-end, and also extended an invitation to all the children of Thornwell Orphanage to be guests of the Atlanta homes for the occasion. It was held on November 12, 1911 and Dr. David James Burrell of the Marble Collegiate Church of New York was the speaker for the occasion. In the afternoon at the Grand Opera House, Dr. Burrell made an address to the men on the "Men and Religion Movement." The offering that year was to liquidate the debt on the Presbyterian Hospital.²⁰ The third of these occasions was on November 9, 1912, with Dr. Robert E. Speer of the Foreign Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as the speaker. The following day, the paper stated that there were 8,000 persons in attendance. The offering was for local mission work. At this meeting the announcement came of the plans for the meeting of the four Assemblies in May, 1913.²¹

This joint gathering of the four General Assemblies was the climax of the Jubilee meetings. The United Presbyterian Church held its meetings at Central Presbyterian Church. The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church held its sessions at the local Associate Reformed Church at the corner of Whitehall Street and Whitehall Terrace. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) met at the Baptist Tabernacle. The Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.) held its session at North Avenue Church.²² General meetings were held throughout the week in the city auditorium, and were participated in by all the assemblies. They considered such matters as pertained to Missions, Evangelism, Education, work among Colored People, and Sunday Schools. It was estimated that there were about 1,500 representatives in attendance upon the four assembly meetings. Mr. William T. Ellis, who covered the meetings for the press, stated concerning the communion service that it was the greatest interdenominational communion service ever held. The newspapers gave very full coverage to all the sessions. Dr. Flinn presided at the opening session with Elder J. K. Orr bringing words of welcome. Many related meetings featured the sessions. Daily meetings were held in theaters and factories. Mayor Woodward granted permission for street preaching, but restricted the corner at Five Points. Mr. Melville Trotter held a service each day in front of the auditorium. The only social function in connection with the sessions was an afternoon reception at Agnes Scott College, to which the Georgia

20. Ibid.—November 11-13, 1911.

21. The *Atlanta Journal*—Nov. 8-10, 1912.

22. Ibid.—May 15, 1913.

Railroad ran a special train. Dr. J. S. Lyons of Louisville, Ky., was elected Moderator of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.),²³ and the acquaintance thus made led to his later being called as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. The headline of the *Atlanta Journal* read thus: "Dr. Lyons, the U. S. Moderator, represents the liberal wing of the church."²⁴ Dr. Robery Ivey, a commissioner, was later called to the Georgia Avenue Church.²⁵ This meeting gave wide publicity to the virility of Atlanta Presbyterianism. It did much also to bring the churches of the Presbytery into cooperative effort.

This quarter century also revealed a development of stewardship, with an increased participation in the mission causes of the church. It opened with a very irregular method of giving. Many churches reported no regular plan of financial support, saying, "the only plan is passing the hat."²⁶ As an early step an envelope plan was urged upon town churches, and a subscription plan upon country churches.²⁷ The report of a single year showed that thirty percent of the churches had not met their financial obligations to their pastors.²⁸ Not half of the churches had any plan for supporting the causes of the church. In a few, some individual would send funds to the treasurer of the Presbytery for division among the causes, and ask that credit be given the church. Here was a place where the Committee on Systematic Beneficence and its chairman served. Churches that did well were commended. A few were chided. The showing made by the churches was reported. Exhortations and appeals were made. Successful plans were set forth. In this manner a uniform plan for support of all the causes throughout the year was being developed. When each church worked alone, gains were few. Working together, they encouraged and provoked one another to good works. Reports for these twenty-five years showed that membership had a little more than doubled, while gifts to the various causes of the church had multiplied nearly ten times.²⁹

Presbytery was becoming aware of its own strength. As it expanded it girded itself for a larger task, which could not be performed by churches working alone, but rather by a Presbytery working as a unit.

23. Ibid.—May 15-22, 1913.

24. Ibid.—May 16, 1913.

25. List of Commissioners in *Atlanta Journal*—May 20, 1913.

26. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 20, 1890.

27. Ibid.—Apr. 20, 1890.

28. Ibid.—Mar. 14, 1899.

29. Comparative statistical statements of respective years.

STRENGTH OF THE
PRESBYTERY OF ATLANTA
As seen in 1915

Number of Churches	68
Number of Ministers	57
Whole Number of Communicants	8,970
Number of Sunday Schools	54
Sunday School Enrollment	10,136
Total Gifts to Benevolences	\$90,905
Churches Holding Service Each Sabbath	17
Churches Added to the Roll in the Period 1890-15	32
Churches Erased from the Roll	6

VII

At Work



1. STILL GROWING

THE period "At Work" in the life of the Presbytery, dating from 1915, has been one of varied experiences. A new sense of solidarity in common tasks had appeared. New united endeavors in the field of Evangelism, in Church Extension, in Religious Education and in Stewardship were made. Many other efforts were along lines not already charted, calling for wider service under changing conditions. This period of united service proved also to be one of remarkable growth. God was in it. The total membership of the Presbytery grew from 7,944 in 1915 to 36,000 in 1960. The number of churches increased from 66 to 95. This growth was also reflected in the size of the individual churches and prevailed through the whole list of churches—the average membership increasing from 120 to 378. Where there had been only 10 churches with a membership of over 150 in 1915, there were 53 in 1960. Nor was this growth in membership confined to the Atlanta area, but could be seen in all parts of the Presbytery. Greater Atlanta membership was four times its former figure, but non-Atlanta membership was two and one-half times greater.¹ The individual church was made stronger by reducing the number of churches served by a single minister and providing more frequent services.

New forces were at work and God was using all these forces. (a) Of great significance was the sudden development of the tex-

1. Comparison of annual reports for the years 1915 and 1956.

tile industry, which with a new energy entered many towns, including LaGrange, Newnan, Griffin, Thomaston, West Point, Covington and others. (b) Mass production of automobiles led to the development of good roads, and brought many outlying towns within commuting distance of Atlanta, thus bringing financial resources to the towns. (c) Mechanized farm equipment reduced the rural population, leading more people to the towns and cities. (d) A missionary passion moved many of the pastors and the churches they served, so that churches founded other churches. (e) The Presbytery was better able to promote systematically its Home Mission task, and this resulted in more continuous pastorates. (f) Lastly, the coming of Columbia Seminary into the bounds of the Presbytery provided more fully a ministerial supply for the churches.² Under the influence of these forces, an increasing number of older churches became independent of financial aid and an increasing number of new churches were organized.

The Presbytery was at work, and the large number of churches sponsoring the organization of a new church was significant. New churches found their origin through several procedures. One procedure was the withdrawal of a large section of the membership of one or more churches to form a new one. This had proved effective at an earlier period in the organization of North Avenue and Westminster Churches. This method has sometimes proved very costly to the mother church. A second method of procedure was organization by the evangelist whose wide territory and many responsibilities greatly limited the attention that could be given to the young church. This was the easiest method of establishing a small new church, but its permanence depended upon the experience of the local leaders, upon the genuineness of their Christian character, and upon their spirit of determination. In small groups, men with these qualities were not always found. A third method of procedure was the establishment of work in a new area by an already active church. This latter method has proved most effective and fruitful, and largely characterizes the efforts of the present period. Officers of the mother church were able to lend guidance as long as needed. There was less haste in actual organization. The sponsoring church has had larger incentive to financial aid, and after organization it still retained its interest. The initial life of the young church was more normal. Such an endeavor required first a minister with a

2. See Section VII, Chapter 6.

faith in and a zeal for the project, and secondly, a church ready to cooperate with him and sustain its interest.

The story of this period is the study of the sponsoring churches and their ministers, as well as of the new churches themselves. One of the early figures of this period was Dr. J. S. Lyons who had recently come to the First Church of Atlanta. He found a small struggling Sunday School at Peachtree Heights, which had been in operation for several years and was led by some of his members.³ New people were building homes in the section. In conjunction with the Home Mission Committee the Rev. F. D. Stevenson was called to become the mission pastor.⁴ Out of this mission came the Peachtree Road Church in the Fall of 1919. The interest of the First Church in its earlier ventures, as well as in the following ones, was the discovering of a site, the provision of initial housing, and the bringing of a minister to the work. Again in 1925, attention of the First Church was drawn to the new Morningside neighborhood, where a site was acquired with a dwelling on it. Rev. Carl McMurray was brought to rally the forces for the organization of a church.⁵ Granting the wishes of interested people, and supported by the First Church and the Home Mission Committee, Presbytery organized the Morningside Church in November of 1925, which after two or three years required no financial assistance.⁶ The third venture was the Trinity Church, under the active leadership of Dr. Wm. V. Gardner. Dr. Gardner from his first coming to Atlanta took a vital part in the Home Mission work of the church, serving almost continuously on Presbytery's Committee and for about ten years on the Assembly's Committee. His pulpit ever sounded forth the full Gospel of the redeeming Christ, and his voice sounded on radio waves far beyond the borders of the state. His approach to the problems of the church was direct and his judgment sympathetic and wise. To Trinity he and his church gave fine direction and support. In cooperation with the Home Mission Committee, a site was purchased, regular services conducted and a church organized in the summer of 1949. The Rev. Allison Williams was called to become pastor. The First Church gave liberally of funds for the erection of the first building, and of its membership for the strengthening of the organization. From the beginning the church assumed the full support of its minister.⁶

3. *Atlanta Journal*—Dec. 2, 1911.

4. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Fall 1919, p. 24.

5. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—July 7, 1925.

6. Note Statistical Tables on Pastors' Salaries.

The Covington Church under the leadership of Dr. J. B. Ficklen sought opportunities to widen its influence. Some of its elders were ready to lead in mission Sunday Schools, and several such schools were established and maintained for a longer or shorter period in such buildings as could be obtained.⁷ Three churches came into being as a result of these activities. The Porterdale Church in 1917, the Gum Creek Church in 1921, and the Pine Grove Church in 1922. With the departure of Dr. Ficklen, enthusiasm waned. The population of Porterdale increased with the enlarging of the cotton-mill, and under the guidance of the Home Mission Committee the church there came to self-support.⁸ At the other points there has been a declining population. The churches retain their Sunday Schools and the Presbytery provides services under the leadership of nearby ministers.

During this period the Decatur Church in its surrounding area continued its activities to meet the needs of new population centers. Dr. D. P. McGeachy came to Decatur upon the eve of its greatest population growth. Under his aggressive ministry of a quarter century he saw his church triple in size. He was a faithful student, a wide reader and diligent pastor. He gave much thought to the application of Christian principles to the various phases of modern life, being greatly concerned over the evils of war. He never failed to seize an opportunity to extend the work of the Presbytery. With his encouragement, groups of workers from various church organizations went out to serve. Sunday Schools were established, and ministers or student-pastors were secured to develop the work and hold services. Oakhurst Church grew out of meetings in a school-house and in a tent, and was organized in 1921.⁸ Within a few years it was able to maintain itself.⁶ Alexander Memorial Church grew out of cottage meetings, and Sunday School meetings held in a renovated cottage building. The church was organized in 1938, men of the neighborhood erecting their own church building. Before its tenth birthday, it was able to walk alone.⁶ Glen Haven Church developed from a Sunday School held first in a shed, then in a remodeled store building, and then in a community house. It was organized in 1939. Cottage prayer-meetings, following a survey by Presbytery's worker, gathered a nucleus for Emory Church.⁹ A full program of services in the Woman's Club building followed,

7. Among them, L. W. Jarman and James Gardner.

8. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Fall 1921, p. 18.

9. The canvass was made by Miss Elizabeth Loyd.

leading to a church organization in 1941, and to the coming of the Rev. Donald B. Bailey as first pastor. In all these enterprises the Decatur Church, along with the Home Mission Committee, has provided assistance toward the minister's salary and in the erection of the initial building.

Dr. S. Hugh Bradley succeeded to the pastorate in 1943, and cultivated the interest of the church in extension. A Negro Sunday School, which for at least 25 years had been sponsored by the Decatur Church, was ready to consider a church organization. Mr. Edward Jones had long been its superintendent. Rev. Earl E. Newberry, a Negro minister of the Presbytery of North and South Carolina, was invited to shepherd the little flock.¹⁰ Trinity Church, in 1944, was organized by and became a member of the same Presbytery of North and South Carolina,¹¹ (now the Presbytery of Georgia-Carolina).

Another venture of the Decatur Church, and in this the Oakhurst Church assumed joint interest, was the Columbia Church, organized in the chapel of Columbia Theological Seminary in early 1947, and composed of members living in the neighborhood of the seminary. For several years the church continued to worship in the chapel with the Rev. W. J. Hazelwood as its first pastor. Under his leadership a well-appointed educational building was erected, which was followed by the recent erection of a beautiful sanctuary.

With new residential areas developing to the north of Decatur, three churches, Decatur, Druid Hills and Oakhurst, joined in the developing of a church on a site already owned by the Presbytery. The site had been given to the Presbytery, as an act of devotion, by Dr. Archibald and Mr. Arthur J. Smith, to whom the property had come by inheritance. On this land, thus acquired in 1947, rose the first chapel of the Clairmont Church which had been organized on June 19, 1952 in the auditorium of the W. D. Thompson School. The church has grown more rapidly than the church has been able to provide space and equipment for its activities. The Rev. Max Milligan became its first pastor and leads effectively this fast-growing institution.

Again the Decatur church looked to the northeast and gave encouragement to an active group in the Medlock Road area, who rallied their forces about a site which had been acquired by the Druid Hills Church, the Decatur Church and the Church Extension

10. Minutes of the Home Mission Committee—June 1942.

11. See program for the occasion dated Mar. 3, 1944.

Committee some five years previously. A church of over a hundred members was organized in late October of 1955, and called itself the North Decatur Presbyterian Church. It held its early services in the Medlock School auditorium and later erected its first unit on its own lot, built in contemporary style.

The Synod's Work Committee, through its secretary, Dr. J. B. Ficklen, gave special attention to rural areas throughout the state,¹² and in the promotion of Synod's program, entered two rural communities within the Presbytery of Atlanta, namely, Cowpens and Oak Grove.¹³ Young women pioneer workers visited the areas and surveyed the religious situation. They organized Sunday Schools and cultivated friendly relations with the people, giving special attention to work among women and children. The men of each community were enlisted in the erection of a church building. Growing out of these beginnings came the organization of the Pannell Church in 1924, and of Oak Grove Church in 1928. Lack of permanence in the population prevented substantial growth. Pannell Church was merged with the Monroe Church when that church was organized in that city in 1950. The Oak Grove Church, greatly weakened by removals, was dissolved.

As this period progressed, the city of LaGrange grew in importance. Textile mills enlarged their plants and built others. In consequence the population of the city grew rapidly. The LaGrange Presbyterian Church, under able leadership, enlisted a large increase of membership, and benefitted by increased resources. The pastors, Rev. H. E. Russell and Rev. J. A. Wilson, were anxious to make these resources count for the extension of the church. A group of members living to the south of LaGrange, led by Mr. Russell, gathered together the nucleus of South Highland Church, which was organized in 1944. This church has erected its place of worship and its manse. To the north, a group of people who had attended Union Chapel, long sponsored by the Presbyterian Church,¹⁴ now led by Mr. Wilson, were organized into the Dallas Church (1949). They erected, largely by their own labor, their church building and their manse.

The church at Carrollton has felt a sense of responsibility for the area surrounding it. For many years it had helped as a big brother to the Tallapoosa Church. Its attention was drawn in 1947 to the

12. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1927, p. 31.

13. Ibid.

14. *Atlanta Presbytery at Work* (see article on chapel work in Troup County).

Oak Mountain community, about four miles from Carrollton, where a mission Sunday School was begun in the local school building. By the end of 1949 a chapel building had been erected and dedicated. Carrollton still continues its oversight of the enterprise. Then in 1952 it looked toward the town of Bremen in Haralson County. The next year Mr. Pierre DuBose, then a student at Columbia Seminary, undertook to direct the work in Haralson County, caring for the Tallapoosa Church and developing a new work in Bremen. By 1954, a sufficient group had been gathered to justify an organization at Bremen. Accordingly, a new church came into being. The Bremen Church was quick to erect a small utility building, which immediately afforded it a suitable place of worship until it was able to add an attractive chapel. To bind together all these centers of activity about Carrollton into some cooperative endeavors the West Georgia Larger Parish was erected.

This interest in the establishment of new churches was shared from the beginning in many quarters. The young Pryor Street Church sent one of its elders to study a new suburban development to be known as Capitol View.¹⁵ A group of Presbyterians, largely members of Central Church, were enlisted in a new organization by Mr. Hoyt Miller, then a seminary student. For the initial meetings, Mr. W. D. Beatie of Central Church lent the use of one of his cottages. Young men from Central greatly assisted in the Sunday School.¹⁵ Rev. J. E. Hemphill of Pryor Street Church guided the activities.¹⁶ The Capitol View Church was organized in the summer of 1917 after about six months of mission activity. Their original building, which was erected the following year,¹⁵ was recently abandoned for a new and commodious structure on Sylvan Road.

Central Church, which from the early days of Presbytery, took large interest in new projects, was not unmindful of the large Negro population. To it is due largely the credit for work among them. First, it was at the Fraser Street Mission, where Rev. G. R. Buford, Central's assistant pastor,¹⁷ superintended the work. Then it was at Rice Memorial Mission in the Pittsburg section of Atlanta.¹⁸ This mission began its work with a Sunday School in a converted dwelling on Coleman Street near the corner of Mary Street. This same building is now used as a manse. Here the Rice Memorial Church was organized in 1923. Rev. George W. Gideon was called to

15. Statement of Mr. M. O. Hollis, Atlanta, Ga. (a charter member).

16. Minutes of Presbytery of Atlanta—Spring 1917, p. 21.

17. Miss Azile Simpson of Central Church.

18. Minutes of Atlanta Presbytery—Spring 1919.

become pastor.¹⁹ This church cast its lot with the Presbytery of North and South Carolina.²⁰

Central Church was also interested in the development of work at Lakewood. To the church, when organized here, Central Church contributed a group of members, from among whom were chosen some of the initial officers.²¹ Substantial financial help was also given. Rev. Wilds S. DuBose was employed to gather the initial group of members in 1947, and they worshiped at the first in the local theater building.

The Gordon Street Church, led by its pastor, Rev. Harold M. Shields, began a work out at the northwest edge of Atlanta. One of its elders, Mr. J. Harry Wilson, was very active in the establishment of the Sunday School, and when in 1929 the time came for the organization of the Woodlawn Church, he became one of the charter members.²²

The Kirkwood Church sponsored a work directly to the south. Rev. J. B. Sloan, the pastor, and two elders, J. B. Tuggle and M. J. Woods, took the lead. The first meetings were held in a grove on Flat Shoals Road. In unfavorable weather, shelter was sought in a nearby dwelling. Mr. and Mrs. V. P. Warren gave the Kirkwood Church a building site and also some financial assistance. With the help and the sacrificial efforts of many, the Wee Kirk chapel was erected, patterned in plan after the well-known church in Scotland. The group was organized as a church in early 1947.

The William Elliott Class of the Druid Hills Church inquired for some worthwhile project and fulfilled their desire by the establishing of a mission Sunday School in a small building they had erected a short distance to the northeast of Decatur. It was given the name of "Kittredge Chapel" in memory of the mother of the donor of the land. For years it was the custom of the pastor of the Druid Hills Church to hold at the chapel a worship service one Sunday afternoon a month. After several years it became apparent that the future of the chapel required a change of plan. This resulted in the organization of Rehoboth Church in the summer of 1949. A new site was chosen which was more accessible. Upon it was erected the present church plant.

A small group of churches was organized by the Presbytery

19. Ministerial Directory.

20. Minutes of General Assembly—1927 (see Statistical Table of Presbytery).

21. Sessional Record of Lakewood Church.

22. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Spring 1929, p. 38. (See also Sessional Records of the Woodlawn Church.)

direct, without local sponsorship, and with varying success. A small group of members was gathered into a church at Duluth by Mr. Goff. Its strength rested largely in one man who became an elder upon its organization in 1917. It did not have its building, but held its services in the Baptist Church building. The strength of the church disintegrated upon the departure of the elder.²³ The church was later dissolved.

A church was organized in the town of Monroe in 1922 with about 17 members.²⁴ For a brief period services were held in the building of the Christian Church, but a sudden removal of substantial leadership, before even a building could be erected, so discouraged the church as to lead to its abandonment.²⁵ Again in 1950 the Presbytery saw an opportunity to reenter the city and acquire a church building and a manse. The Methodists had erected a new building and had offered their old building for sale. The Presbyterians purchased the old building and then also purchased a manse. Mr. John Haley of the seminary was sent into the community to gather the people together. During the summer a church was organized, and later Rev. E. H. Overcash became the first pastor. Thus, the third effort of the Presbytery to establish a church in Monroe had proved permanent.

In the year 1924, a group of members from the Inman Park Church were anxious to meet the needs of the Clifton community which had recently developed to the east. They obtained the consent of Presbytery, and withdrew their membership from the Inman Park Church to enter an organization which they called the Clifton Church. Others in the community joined with them, and they enlisted the pastoral services of Rev. E. P. Carson.

The same year a group of people in a rural section of Gwinnett County asked for a church. A small organization was developed and known as Bethel Church. A church building was erected, but a constantly fluctuating population has kept this church small and its future uncertain.

A large and promising suburban residential development had grown to the southwest of Atlanta, miles from the nearest church. Presbyterians resident in the neighborhood desired a nearby church. Coming out of a spontaneous movement, a petition was brought to the Presbytery asking for an organization.²⁶ Active leadership in

23. Sessional Records of the Duluth Church.

24. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Fall 1922, p. 20.

25. *Ibid.*—Apr. 18, 1928.

26. *Ibid.*—Jan. 18, 1949.

the movement was given by two elders of the West End Church, R. J. Loftin and M. W. Blanton. The Presbytery gave its assistance both by counsel and funds, and both the West End and Gordon Street churches yielded members. As a result, the Cascade Road Church was born in early 1949 with about 80 members. Rev. N. G. Barron came to be the first pastor. From the very first the church supported its own minister.²⁷ The Presbytery assisted in the acquiring of an adequate site and in the erection of the first building and in obtaining a manse.

With the extension of the city northward, call came from persons residing in the vicinity of Oglethorpe University for some place of worship according to the Presbyterian order. The Strategy Committee, charged with the responsibility for directing the expanding church in Atlanta, approved an effort at Oglethorpe and assigned responsibility to the Peachtree Road Church. Dr. E. T. Wilson, the pastor, and the officers of the church were enthusiastic and undertook the work. The University lent the use of its chapel for services. After but a few weeks, the Presbytery deemed that the time for organization had arrived. A colony came from Peachtree Road Church, and along with others were organized into the Oglethorpe Church in early 1949. Services were at first maintained by various ministers. Mr. Albert Wells, a student, was employed to open the work. Following this beginning, the church called as its first pastor the Rev. F. M. Legerton. The Presbytery provided a site and some financial assistance. The first building was occupied in the summer of 1951. The promise of a strong and influential church is bright.

Another church of the Presbytery came as a result of the interest and enthusiasm of the Oakhurst Church. The latter church desired some challenging task. A new housing development on Glenwood Avenue caught its attention. Investigation revealed a genuine opportunity. Presbytery acquired a wooded site, upon which the workers from Oakhurst Church established a Sunday School. A small shelter was erected to care for equipment until a brick chapel could be erected. Oakhurst Church assumed responsibility for the building of the chapel. The pastor, Rev. Francis B. Benton, assisted by several of the elders, gave excellent leadership, and in the summer of 1951, upon the second anniversary of the first meeting of the Sunday School, the Glenoak Church was organized, and its charter roll included 110 members.

An interesting development within the Presbytery in 1953 was a

27. Statistical Tables of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Spring 1950.

vision of service which came to the Presbyterian Officers' Association of Atlanta and which contemplated an expanding Presbyterian Church in Metropolitan Atlanta. Under the primary leadership of Mr. Raymond Turpin, an elder of the First Church of Atlanta, the Association adopted as its goal, "Ten New Churches in Atlanta," and became a strong right arm of the church Extension Committee. The Association and the Committee worked in close cooperation. The first result of the effort was the acquiring of a splendid property in Sandy Springs, on which stood an old mansion. This furnished the site on which the Mt. Vernon Church was organized in the late spring of 1954, and of which the Rev. Harold W. Minor became the first pastor. The old building was modernized and converted to Sunday School use, and an adjoining fellowship building was erected. On its second birthday the church membership numbered about 250.

The second venture of the Association was the Memorial Drive Church, organized in the spring of 1954. The Rev. R. T. Gillespie, D.D., of the faculty of Columbia Seminary, gave sacrificial and constructive leadership to the development of this church. Upon a site, given in two parcels by Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Bachman and Mrs. Leona Fowler Weekes, the first unit of the church building arose in a then sparsely settled area, but which is now filling with residences.

A Negro Church on the West side of Atlanta was also sponsored, which received also large support from the Assembly's Campaign for Negro Work. By the very kind permission of the owners of the Waluhaje Apartment Hotel services were begun in November 1954 and resulted in the organization of the Westhills Presbyterian Church in the spring of 1955. The chapel with a fellowship hall is now complete and is occupied for regular worship and other church activities. Rev. Henry B. Sweet was called as pastor.

The Forest Park church, organized in late 1954 in the Forest Park School, was the outgrowth of an earlier survey of the metropolitan area. Local Presbyterians asked for a church in their community. The movement was sponsored by the Church Extension Committee, with the strong financial support of the Presbyterian Officers. An ample church property was acquired and the first attractive church unit was constructed. Rev. C. Lee Wilson became the first pastor of the church.

The amazing development of the Greater Atlanta area, and, accompanying it, the inner longing of suburban peoples for some center of religious life in their midst, made imperative the wisest use of all resources, both financial and spiritual. Previous surveys

were revised and new areas included in a renewed study made under the direction of Mr. Hal Hyde of the Assembly's Board. Acting upon this information the Presbyterian Officers acquired an initial site in the southeastern section of DeKalb County on Columbia Drive. Three churches, Alexander Memorial, Columbia and Oakhurst, under the leadership of their pastors, gave certain influential members and vigorous direction, with the result that in June of 1956, in a converted dwelling, the Hillside Church was born. Two units of a permanent church plant have been erected.

At this point, however, after the completion of twenty years of service as secretary of the Committee of Church Extension (formerly the Committee of Home Missions), the author had attained the age of "threescore years and ten," and therefore retired from the work in order to place it in younger and more vigorous hands.

DR. BONNEAU H. DICKSON BECOMES SECRETARY

The story of a growing Presbytery continues under new leadership. The Presbytery turned to Dr. Bonneau H. Dickson, then pastor of the Rock Spring Church, and called him to become Executive Secretary of Church Extension. The choice was wise, and the author finds pleasure in paying a tribute of esteem for and confidence in his successor. Dr. Dickson's grasp of the work was immediate, and his application enthusiastic. Behind him the Presbytery placed the same confidence and loyalty that it had always tendered his predecessor. One leader was laid aside; there was the sounding of taps; and a new leader arose. The march was forward. The Kingdom of Christ moves on, though His servants come and go. The direction of work experienced no interval. The Presbytery at work continues its remarkable growth.

At the southwestern edge of Atlanta in the Ben Hill area, the spreading population caught the attention of the nearby pastors in the East Point, College Park and Cascade Road Churches. In consultation, they agreed upon a common effort to rally a Presbyterian constituency at Ben Hill. To this end the three ministers served in turn in conducting vesper services there each Sunday afternoon. This beginning was made late in the year 1955. To serve as a place of worship the use of the county health center was tendered. Services were held in this center until the church could erect its own home. In due course the program of religious services was enlarged and Mr. George Wright was enlisted to develop a church. This aim was achieved when in December of 1956 a church

of 40 members was organized to be known as the Ben Hill Church. A property had also been acquired. Mr. Wright became the first pastor.

Transferring our attention from the southwestern section of the metropolitan area to the northeast, we look with the North Avenue Church at the Northwoods area of DeKalb County. There that church planned a new project. Under the guidance of the Church Extension Committee the first survey was made by volunteer workers in early January of 1957, at which time announcement was made of an initial service in the Northwoods school building in early February. From this beginning regular services were continued. Mr. R. E. Randolph of the seminary was engaged to become student pastor, to gather interested persons and to prepare them for the organization of a church. Approximately one year from the date of the first service the Northwoods Church was organized with approximately 50 members. They now occupy their own building.

The outer circle widened still farther. Where the Indians and early settlers once traveled the lonely Shallowford Road, a great city had spread out to line it with homes. Mr. J. R. Carmichael, an elder of the North Avenue Presbyterian Church, who lives in the area, joined with his wife in an offer to the Presbytery of a site for a church. Along with their interest and the interest of their church was enlisted the interest of the Clairmont Church. The Rev. Kirk Nesbit then serving the youth activities of the North Avenue Church and the Presbyterian youth of the Georgia School of Technology, saw at Shallowford an opportunity for a needed and attractive service. He made the church venture there his own. Development was rapid. A community survey was made on Sunday afternoon of May 25, 1958. The first service was held in the Carmichael home on June 1 of the same year. This led rapidly to the organization of a church of 39 charter members on July 27th, which became known as the Shallowford Church.

To the time of this writing, one more church has developed. About 35 miles south of Atlanta is Fayetteville, the county seat of Fayette County. For over a century that county has been without a Presbyterian Church. There are, however, records of an early church which disappeared in later migrations. The lack of such a church remained as a burden upon the heart of Mrs. Nannie Waldrop, who long had carried her hopes to her Lord. More lately, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Price had made Fayetteville their home, and they felt similar concern. From this continued concern and longing came steps looking to a church. Permission was obtained for the

use of the General Assembly's mobile chapel. In this chapel, temporarily placed on the Price property, was held the first service in May 1957. A beautiful property located on the northern edge of the town of Fayetteville was purchased through the generous cooperation of Mr. Blake Gilbert, an elderly local citizen. Mr. Gilbert immediately took a substantial part of the selling price and made it the first large gift for a building. It was only a short time thereafter that his earthly life came to a close, but herein "his works do follow him." Though the community of Fayetteville is at present small, a church of 20 members was organized in June of 1959. It is at present meeting in the Masonic Hall and is being served by the pastor of the Riverdale Church.

Like the book of the Acts of the Apostles, this narrative must end abruptly. Other chapters will doubtless be written. He, by whose favor we live and serve, is still in our midst. His Spirit still calls to duty. His Providence opens the way. May we of our age continue to take new steps where our fathers have led the way.

Such is the remarkable story of the cooperative working of the Churches, of the Presbyterian Officers Association and of the Church Extension Committee, blessed by the Master of us all. The churches have felt a just pride in their achievements, and a loyal Home Mission Committee has given wholehearted support. The sponsoring churches have rejoiced in the broadening of their mission endeavors. The younger churches have gained the inspiration of a virile Presbyterianism. There has been a developing sense of strength which has led the younger churches to assume in their early days a larger share of their own support. From the start the new churches are participating in the whole plan of the Presbytery. The opportunity for future development seems unlimited. A Presbytery at work has seen many of its churches reaching out to establish other churches to share in the work for the glory of the Redeemer.

NOTE—In this chapter no effort is made to authenticate information easily found in the minutes, nor to substantiate occurrences of which the author was witness.

VII

At Work



2. NORTH AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN SCHOOL

THE families of Dr. R. O. Flinn, Judge E. C. Kontz, and Dr. M. M. Hull lived as neighbors, all along Peachtree Street near North Avenue.¹ All were actively interested in the North Avenue Presbyterian Church. As their children became of school age they talked often to one another about their education. Out of these conversations came thoughts of a Christian school, and hopes arose that such a school might be established in connection with their church. At a Session meeting on June 7, 1909, the matter was brought up for consideration and for any action that might be deemed wise. A committee was thereupon appointed, with Judge Kontz as chairman, "to take under advisement the organization of a school, . . . such school to be conducted under the authority of the Session, but at no expense to the church."² Six weeks later, after reporting to the Session, the committee gained approval for the enterprise, but with one dissenting vote.³ Plans began immediately for the establishment of the school and Judge Kontz laid the matter before the congregation for its approval and support.³ The Session answered a request for the use of the church building by the following action: "That authority be given for the day school to be

1. Statement of Mrs. R. O. Flinn, Atlanta, Ga.

2. Sessional Records of North Avenue Church—June 7, 1909.

3. Ibid.—July 25, 1909.

organized and continued during the session in the two rooms of the basement of the church."⁴

Accordingly, the North Avenue Presbyterian Day School opened its doors to its first class of 20 pupils on Wednesday, September 15, at 9 o'clock A.M. with Miss Emma Askew in charge as teacher. The Bulletin of the church announced to the membership and patrons that the same studies would be taught as in the corresponding grades in public schools, and in addition the Bible would be taught daily.⁵ The first school was made up of about an equal number of boys and girls, in two grades.⁶ The first Board of Trustees was composed of Judge Kontz, President; Mr. Anderson, Secretary and Treasurer; and also Messrs. W. L. Moore, J. S. Cameron, and Dr. M. M. Hull.⁵ The Pastor of the church was always a member ex-officio. The desks were kept movable so as not to interfere with church use of the building. The janitor had his weekly chore of moving the desks back and forth.⁵

The ready response that attended the first session encouraged the reopening of the school for the second session on a larger scale. Miss Allison Badger joined the teaching staff for this second session, and the enrollment was enlarged so that 53 pupils were admitted.⁷ In cooperation with the Y.M.C.A. a physical department was added, in which Mr. S. B. Magee of the Association gave a small portion of his time to the school.⁷ The church needed further facilities for its own work, and therefore purchased additional property to the south of the church, where the "Church House" was provided. The North Avenue Presbyterian School (the word "day" was very early dropped from the title by common use) moved into the new building in the fall of 1911 with a greatly enlarged curriculum.⁸ Miss Emma Askew had left and Miss Harriet Thomas became Principal, remaining but one year. During this year the faculty was enlarged, and high school studies were added. Among the teachers coming to the school that year was Mrs. S. H. Askew, who remained about 18 years. It was intended to limit the school to 100, but by the close of the session 138 pupils had been enrolled.⁹ The year by year growth was remarkable, and when Miss Sarah Con-

4. Ibid.—Sept. 6, 1909.

5. North Avenue Bulletin—Sept. 12, 1909.

6. See photograph of first class in *Naps Views*.

7. Ibid.—May 29, 1910.

8. Ibid.—Sept. 3, 1911.

9. Ibid.—Sept. 3, 1911.

verse assumed her work as Principal for the fourth session there were 175 children enrolled.¹⁰ Miss Converse remained for about five years, and found it necessary to obtain the use of adjoining property for class rooms. During the next few years the school was troubled by the uncertain rental of suitable property. One building after another was withdrawn by the lessors, and the high school was moved into as many as four different buildings. Among teachers serving at this time was Miss Janie McGaughey with a record of about six years of duty.¹¹

Following Miss Converse came Miss Thyrsa Askew in 1917, to remain as Principal until 1951.¹¹ The remarkable development of North Avenue School was in large measure the story of her devotion, her capacity as a teacher, her imagination, and her administrative ability. The chairmanship of the Board, after a brief period under Judge Kontz and a still briefer period under Mr. Frank Inman, fell upon Dr. Marion Hull, who led the school through a long period of about 30 years.¹¹ The tenure of office of Dr. Flinn, Miss Askew, and Dr. Hull spans most of the years of the school's service, and, while they were ably assisted by others, to them belongs the greater part of the glory of achievement.

Dr. Richard Orme Flinn spent practically all of his 54 years in the ministry within the bounds of the Presbytery of Atlanta. Not only did the North Avenue School owe much to his leadership, but the Presbytery owes much. Three churches rejoiced in his ministry—Kirkwood, North Avenue, and Roswell—yet the strength of his life was given to North Avenue Church. He was a son of the manse and gained his training in our own institutions. The story of North Avenue Church from its organization is the interpretation of his life. His interest in training in the Scriptures, in evangelism, and in missions was manifest. For his gentle ministry in sickness, in distress, and in sorrow, many hearts are grateful. A Presbytery that has profited for half a century by his participation in its life may count itself blessed.

Uncertain housing of North Avenue Presbyterian School led to plans for a new and permanent home for the school. In the fall of 1920 the school made its first move to Ponce de Leon Avenue. The Johnson property was purchased, and then followed in rapid succession the purchase of property to the east, the erection of the middle building, and then of the high school building to the rear—

10. Ibid.—July 7, 1911ff.

11. Statement of Miss Thyrsa Askew, Atlanta, Ga.

all of this in a period of five years. To make this expansion possible, financial arrangements were necessary. The Board of Trustees had enough faith in their institution, and the banking firm shared sufficiently in the optimism, to approve a loan to the school in the sum of \$100,000 in the form of a bond issue. This was later increased by \$25,000. Some comparatively small sums were provided as personal gifts for the retirement of these bonds, but it seems almost incredible that the larger part of the indebtedness was liquidated through economical and wise administration of the normal income. This normal income was derived from tuition fees and from small gifts through the benevolent program of several interested churches. By the year 1946 the institution was free of debt, notwithstanding the intervening financial depression.¹²

The enrollment of the school grew from the beginning, but has fluctuated with the passing years. Many conditions have been reflected in the numbers in attendance. Economic prosperity lent an increase, and reverse a decrease in the enrollment. Unfavorable conditions in the public high schools brought students to North Avenue, while improved conditions drew them away. The scholastic standing of North Avenue School has been excellent, and the school was recognized by the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges in 1921.¹² Graduates have made enviable records in the colleges to which they have gone, and have been received without examination into such colleges as Agnes Scott and Randolph Macon.¹³ The enrollment rose as high as 400 in the period of 1927-28 just before the financial depression, and then fell away to a recent enrollment of somewhat over 275. An elementary department has existed alongside the high school department, the latter being usually the larger. Boys have ordinarily been accepted to the sixth grade. A comparatively small girls' boarding department has been cared for in the dormitory.

North Avenue Presbyterian School has been above all a Christian school. From the very beginning the Bible has been taught as a text-book in all classes. Daily chapel exercises have prevailed, being led usually by the principal or vice-principal or by an occasional visitor. In the dormitory, nightly prayers have been conducted by one of the faculty members, and frequently participated in by the girls themselves. The North Avenue Presbyterian Church has been regarded as the church home of the school, and regular

12. Statement of Miss Thyrsa Askew.

13. Statement in *Naps Views*

Sunday morning attendance there at church and Sunday School has been the rule. In the Bible Club many of the girls have found opportunity for further Bible study and for outside practical religious activities in connection with such institutions as Aidmore and the Decatur Methodist Orphans Home.¹²

Responsibilities of administration became too great for the Principal and for the Chairman of the Board, and as a result, in 1942, Dr. Ferguson Wood was invited to become the President of the school in connection with his duties as pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church. It was deemed wise to change the name to Napsonian School, feeling that this might give a wider appeal. During that immediate period the repayment of all indebtedness was completed. When Dr. Wood left the Westminster Church in 1946, the Rev. Richard O. Flinn, Jr., of Carrollton, was called to assume the responsibility. For three years he was associated with the school upon a part-time basis as the dreams of the future were being enlarged. The eyes of the administration were lifted to a larger concept of service, and the school faced the program which is now being developed. Mr. Flinn retired from the school in 1950. North Avenue became a unit of the larger Westminster Schools.¹⁴ This larger school now occupies an adequate 100-acre site, where there is provided a boys' preparatory school and a girls' preparatory school as well as an elementary school, all maintaining the same Christian tradition under continued Presbyterian association. Dr. William L. Pressly fulfills the duties of President.¹⁵

Such schools inevitably contribute to the free democratic spirit of the nation. They resist the encroachment of the state upon the educational life of the country and bear their testimony to the need for basic spiritual elements in any true education. Throughout the years the school has prepared trained Christian womanhood for places of service and influence in home, school, church and state. This school has been one of the blessed enterprises of one of the useful churches in a Presbytery at Work.

14. Recent items in the public press.

15. Ibid.

VII

At Work



3. OGLETHORPE AGAIN

DONALD FRASER School for Boys in Decatur had, under Professor Gardner, afforded an education of high standard under Christian influences.¹ Yet it provided only for the high school years. It was without endowment and continued a hard struggle to exist. Nearby was Agnes Scott College equipped with a beautiful building and having already some endowment. Why then should there not be an institution of similar quality for young men? Friends of Donald Fraser were beginning to feel that their school must enlarge its service and advance its curriculum in order to survive. As a result of these considerations there arose a movement for a university for men within the Synod of Georgia as early as 1901.² It had appointed a committee to explore the possibilities. Thoughts of some turned to a consolidation of Southwestern Presbyterian University of Clarksville, Tenn. and Columbia Theological Seminary of Columbia, S. C.³ The latter idea gained rapid support in and about Atlanta, where the Presbyterians enlisted the citizenship in a move to establish a University in their midst. A city-wide campaign was made in late 1902 in which over \$250,000 were subscribed—to be made available whenever initial steps were taken to erect the university buildings in the vicinity of Atlanta.⁴ This progress was

1. See Section VI, Chapter 4.

2. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1901, p. 26.

3. *Presbyterian of the South*.—July 26, 1911.

4. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1903, p. 7.

reported to the Synod of Georgia at the fall meeting in 1903, and each other synod involved was invited to elect from its number two persons to meet and consider the matter, and then lay it before the several synods.⁵ During the fall of 1904 the University plan was considered by the seven controlling synods. Those controlling Columbia Seminary gave their approval.⁶ There was division among the synods controlling Southwestern University. Two voted favorably and two voted unfavorably, and there was threat of a legal suit.⁷ The matter was closed for a time by an announcement made to the public, and to the citizens of Atlanta in particular, on November 24, 1904, that the effort had failed, and that the subscriptions were released.⁸

The University idea arose again about seven years later. Agnes Scott College had just completed a financial campaign in the city of Atlanta, in which the Rev. Thornwell Jacobs had assumed active direction.⁹ He had come to Atlanta in late 1909, and with the completion of the Agnes Scott campaign, had begun the promotion of the University idea in the *Presbyterian of the South* with which he was connected. Dr. W. L. Lingle, pastor of the First Church of Atlanta, became a ready supporter of the idea, and, in an article in the above paper in the summer of 1911, ventured a few observations concerning a University, and suggested means for providing the initial funds.¹⁰ In the same issue there appeared this statement: "Hundreds . . . of our young men of Presbyterian parentage are now seeking education in schools that are secular or indifferent, and in many cases hostile to religion. They go to these schools because our schools do not furnish the education they desire."¹¹

Dr. Jacobs followed these initial steps by promotional moves, the first of which was the establishment of the *Westminster Magazine*,¹¹ and the second the promotion of annual city-wide Presbyterian rallies, to which earlier reference has been made.¹² He then set himself to and completed the task of enlisting one hundred persons who would each contribute the sum of \$1,000.¹³ This

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.—1904, p. 17.

7. Minutes of the General Assembly—1907, p. 37.

8. *Atlanta Journal*—Nov. 24, 1904.

9. Jacobs, *Step Down Dr. Jacobs*, p. 142 (*Atlanta Journal*—Nov. 25-30, 1904).

10. *Presbyterian of the South*—July 26, 1911.

11. *Step Down Dr. Jacobs*, p. 161.

12. Ibid., p. 144. (See Chapter, 7, Section VI.)

13. Ibid., p. 176 ff.

achievement was followed by a concerted effort in the city of Atlanta to raise in addition at least \$250,000. Supported by the press and under the leadership of Mr. J. W. English and Mr. Ivan E. Allen such a campaign was successfully completed during the first half of December in 1913.¹⁴ This was followed by a tour of the churches of the South by Dr. Jacobs wherever the door opened. One hundred churches each subscribed over a thousand dollars, and were given the privilege of naming someone as a director.¹⁵

Funds were then in hand to begin construction of buildings upon the 60 acres of land which had been given to the institution. The cornerstone was laid in January 1916,¹⁶ and the first building ready for occupancy in the fall of the same year. The first session began with about 48 students on Wednesday, September 20, 1916.¹⁷ On Saturday there was a house-warming, and on Sunday the 24th, all the Presbyterian Churches of the city combined their morning services to meet in a great Jubilee meeting in the city auditorium, where it was reported that 4,000 persons were present. Dr. J. S. Lyons preached the morning sermon, and brief words of greeting were brought by the Hon. Asa G. Candler, and the Hon. Hoke Smith.¹⁸

The institution, while Presbyterian in its origin and concept, won little more than expression of interest from the organized Presbyterian Church. The Presbytery of Atlanta was not officially connected with it. The Synod of Georgia expressed hopes for its success and called upon the churches to endow a chair of Bible in the amount of \$50,000.¹⁹ This fund was never raised. The endorsement of the General Assembly was sought. In 1915, it defined a "Southern Presbyterian Institution" in terms apparently not met in Oglethorpe.²⁰ The matter was again presented to the Assembly in 1917. At that time it termed it a "Georgia institution," and resolved, "That the Assembly decline to adopt Oglethorpe University, and decline to commend it to the churches for their contributions." Recognizing a continued responsibility for schools long in existence, the Assembly urged the "Presbyteries and Synods to increased diligence in building up and maintaining their schools and colleges."²¹

14. *Atlanta Journal*—Dec. 1-10, 1913.

15. Jacobs, *Step Down Dr. Jacobs*, p. 273.

16. *Atlanta Journal*—Jan. 22, 1916.

17. *Ibid.*—Sept. 21, 1916.

18. *Atlanta Journal*—Sept. 25, 1916.

19. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1916, p. 25 and 1918, p. 16.

20. Minutes of the General Assembly—1915, p. 164.

21. *Ibid.*—1917, p. 34.

From time to time new friends were enlisted, and the grounds and buildings were extended. The tie with the church weakened, and further support was denied. The dream of the University faded, and the school was compelled to struggle for its financial existence, for its educational standards, and for the retention of an able faculty. All the forces which develop enthusiasm waned, and the school became but a shadow of its former self.

Dr. Jacobs retired from the presidency in December 1943, and Dr. Philip Weltner was elected to take his place, assuming his duties on January 1, 1944.²² Dr. Weltner found himself with a splendid campus and its well constructed buildings. There was a limited student body in a school un-accredited. Financial resources were strained, and public approval was reserved. It was necessary to study the best use of the campus and buildings, to rethink the purpose of the school, and to take steps to accomplish that purpose. The immediate purpose was stated "to make Oglethorpe a superlatively fine small college."²³ Dr. Weltner came to Oglethorpe with some previous experience as Chancellor of the University System of Georgia, and planned to introduce ideals into a small school which were lacking in the larger state-controlled schools. This ideal was set forth: "The program of Oglethorpe is never aimed at the acquisition of knowledge for its own sake but always at knowledge as a means toward enlarging the student's power to live happily with himself, because he lives worthily as a neighbor and as a useful creative individual."²⁴

Much is made of the opportunity for and the influence of faculty-student relationships. The approach to education is made under the heads of Human Understanding, Citizenship, the Fine Arts, Science, Business, and Community Service. "The work in the first three is aimed primarily at making a life; in the last three, at making a living. The grand design is to develop will and skill for creative effort at work and play, infused with human understanding and broad intelligence."²⁵ An endeavor is made to relate the Bible to the problems of Human Understanding. Of the Bible it is said, "Here are real people, with problems as acute as men ever faced, as individuals, neighbors or citizens, weighing those problems not according to human judgment but in the light of the divine will and purpose. Furthermore, here are men discovering capacities for en-

22. Statement of Dr. Weltner.

23. Jacobs, *Step Down Dr. Jacobs*, p. 731.

24. Oglethorpe Book, p. 7.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

duration and power so far above ordinary human experience that they can ascribe them only to their God."²⁶

Oglethorpe campus embraces 270 acres of land. This land and the buildings on it have a present value of about \$2,500,000. In addition there are endowment funds of about \$1,250,000. The present student enrollment is 300 with 27 Instructors. Oglethorpe was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in December 1950.²⁷

This story is included not because Oglethorpe University is a Presbyterian Institution, but because it sprang from Presbyterian origins, found its inspiration in Presbyterian leadership, and gathered the larger part of its first funds from Presbyterian individuals and churches. With a Presbyterian tradition behind it, it may yet in the future find a relation to that Church congenial.

26. Ibid., p. 8.

27. Statement of Dr. Weltner.

VII

At Work



4. HOME MISSIONS

THE growth of a Presbytery may be measured by the skill and devotion and means with which it presses its Home Mission Work. The motives which prompt the Home Mission enterprise remain the same through the centuries. As material and social conditions change, as resources become more or less adequate, as the supply of mission workers increases or diminishes, so the program of Home Missions is altered. Within our own area it has been an unfolding program, always adapting itself to the existing conditions, according to the best judgment of earnest Christian men.

Concern for the lost souls of men, and the lure of the frontier missions, brought the first Presbyterian ministers to the New Country. So greatly were these pioneers concerned that they were ready to earn their livelihood as teachers in order to be evangelists as opportunity afforded, but their school-rooms limited them to a very narrow field.¹ The church at large, through the General Assembly, was concerned about the neglected frontier, and sent home missionaries into it.² They were usually young single men at the beginning of their ministry serving for a year or two as probationers. They went from place to place as itinerants before accepting a settled pastorate. The Presbytery was troubled over groups of fellow Presbyterians within its midst to whom no one was ministering, and also over the many without Christ to whom no one was going. As

1. Monk, *Life and Work of John S. Wilson*, p. 9.

2. Minutes of the General Assembly—decade 1830-40.

it was able to employ occasional evangelists to minister to the vacant churches and to enter untouched communities.³ This large field of endeavor they termed "Domestic Missions."

Few churches had pastors as we know them today. Fortunate was that parish within whose bounds the school was located. Other churches were fortunate if they could share the blessings of the pastoral oversight of a nearby teacher. What if the teacher should resign his school? Vacancy was frequent, and often of so long duration that the churches languished. The cry came to the Presbytery for supplies, and in its extremity it would direct one or two of its ministers to hold at least one service in each destitute church before the next semi-annual meeting.⁴ One can feel the struggle of Presbytery to remain alive, and gain a fine respect for the unheralded pioneers who bore the burdens of the Gospel. This was the primitive Domestic Missions.

By the time settlements became more permanent, a few of the weak and isolated churches had already perished. Some churches had survived but had become no stronger. Yet there were those churches that grew in membership, in wealth, and in influence. At these churches services were held more frequently and the minister had greater opportunity for pastoral oversight. It became possible for those stronger churches to help the weaker ones. They shared their pastors with these smaller churches and carried the greater part of the load. They contributed to appeals for Domestic Missions and made possible the support of other ministers.⁵ A number of smaller churches were grouped under a single pastor, but this afforded most of the churches only an absentee pastorate. Time brought a little more stability and a little more permanence under the developing plan, but for the most services of the sanctuary were necessarily infrequent. Poor transportation and the long week-end absence from home led to short pastorates. Vacancies between pastorates were often prolonged, because a scattered group of churches found it difficult to engage a pastor. Under these conditions Presbytery endeavored to assist the ministers and the scattered churches by employing an Evangelist for the entire Presbytery who might serve where needed.⁶ Thus there were repeated seasons of special effort which brought to the people unusual Gospel privileges

3. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 11, 1866 (memorial to R. T. Marks).

4. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Mar. 1, 1838.

5. *Charleston Observer*—Apr. 21, 1838.

6. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 29, 1870.

that edified all and enlisted new believers. For most of the churches, Domestic Missions insured at least a monthly visit from a minister and an annual season of revival interest. This was the day of the "Itinerant Evangelist," and such were Rev. R. T. Marks,⁷ Rev. William Dimmock,⁸ Rev. John Jones,⁹ and Rev. J. E. DuBose.¹⁰

Time came when most of the churches were thus supplied, and Presbytery turned its eyes outward to new fields. Dr. J. B. Mack was called as Evangelist to lead into new territory. He searched for places where a nucleus of Presbyterians had moved and where a church might be established. Movement from place to place in the search for employment had become easier, and little groups of Presbyterians had gathered at many new points. At these points, if Presbytery was not too exacting as to numbers, new churches could be organized. The Evangelist traveled over a wider territory and spent correspondingly shorter periods in any one place. But each church thus organized created new financial obligations for the Presbytery. There naturally came a point beyond which the Presbytery could not go without over-spending itself. Such a point was reached by the turn of the century, necessitating the retirement of Dr. Mack.¹²

Such a cycle must always include a period of recovery. There followed a succession of three men, Rev. W. P. Hemphill,¹³ Rev. Frank D. Hunt,¹⁴ and Rev. John Goff.¹⁵ Upon them was laid the responsibility of leading the Presbytery through. Mr. Hemphill addressed himself to the task of reviving and strengthening the weak rural churches—but often passing on to the second field only to leave the first unshepherded. Mr. Hunt searched for the answer to the needs of the Presbytery in some master plan. He worked diligently in developing a sense of stewardship in the weaker churches, and in discovering some grouping of churches in order that regular services, if only once a month, might be held in each church. He performed his work with an insufficient income, but with growing success. His eight years of service left the burden upon Presbytery somewhat lightened, but still acute. His relation to the work of Presbytery was one of transition from the former idea of the travel-

7. Ibid.—Apr. 11, 1868 (memorial to R. T. Marks).

8. Ibid.—Apr. 13, 1872.

9. Ibid.—Oct. 29, 1870.

10. Ibid.—Apr. 17, 1896.

12. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 12, 1890.

13. Ibid.—Oct. 10, 1902.

14. Ibid.—Apr. 16, 1907.

ing evangelist to that of the evangelist and the administrator. Mr. Hunt was followed by the Rev. John Goff, whose duties were differently defined, and he was called to be "Evangelist and Superintendent of Missions."¹⁵ Failing health and a burdensome task permitted him but a short period of service.

All of this was but prelude to the aggressive efforts to be put forth in the period following 1915. When Mr. Goff retired, Presbytery looked for a wise course of action. Through its committee of Home Missions, it turned to the Rev. J. Edwin Hemphill, then pastor of the Pryor Street Church, and called him to be "Superintendent of Home Missions and Sabbath School Work."¹⁶ A growing list of churches, which in many cases were themselves growing larger, required a new approach. No longer was it sufficient to have merely a preaching service once a month. Automobiles were changing the manner of travel. Greater possibilities were seen in the improved Sunday Schools. Young people's societies were engaging the youth of the church. Churches must be supplied not only with a preaching but also with a teaching ministry. Presbytery was being asked not only to provide a ministry, but also to provide a leadership for the various phases of church life. To Mr. Hemphill, and to the committee that worked with him, must be given the credit for the vision and the skill with which the Presbytery performed its larger task. Mr. Hemphill brought to the work a vivid imagination and a fine enthusiasm. He inherited from his father a love for the souls of men and a high devotion to the Kingdom. Though he continued to a degree the work of the Traveling Evangelist, he gave himself more fully to those efforts which would make each pastor a more effective evangelist and each church a more effective evangelistic agency. He enlisted the pastors for special evangelistic endeavors. He promoted a Presbyterian consciousness in the churches. He developed Presbytery-wide Sunday School and Young People's movements. He fostered the welfare of the weaker churches. He inaugurated the Smyrna Conference movement. Under his leadership the Committee on Home Missions and Evangelism became one of the effective and vital forces of the Presbytery. The report of Presbytery states: "His energy, ready and clear way of seeing the needs, fairness in dealing with the churches, his constructive Home Mission policies, combined with his unusual evangelistic gifts, marked a new era in the Home Mission work of our Presbytery."¹⁷

15. Ibid.—Apr. 11, 1917.

16. Ibid.—Apr. 14, 1920.

17. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 23, 1924.

We must pause here for a moment to refer to two members of the Home Mission Committee whose tenure of office spanned a quarter century, and who therefore lent their counsel at many places of decision: Elder C. D. Montgomery and Rev. J. E. Hannah. The former was an elder in the Central Church, faithful in his interest in his church, and a ready participant in every movement proposed by his church or Presbytery. His was a rare and extended tour of service. The latter was the beloved pastor of the Newnan Church who served there for about 40 years. He had so served the people of his city that he became its most beloved citizen. The quiet testimony of a Godly life and an ordered application to the work of the study and to the visitation of his parish, which extended over a long period of years, have left the fruits of grace in many lives. His services to the Presbytery were many and varied, and his works do follow him.

Before four years of service by Mr. Hemphill had elapsed, other work called him away, but the conception of the work and the new avenues of activity remained. Mr. Hemphill was followed by Rev. Wm. Huck,¹⁸ who pursued and enlarged the entire program of his predecessor. The demands of the departments of Religious Education, Young People's work and Conferences and the challenging Home Mission program laid new calls upon his energies. His leadership was given over a period of about thirteen years, and this was a period of growth throughout the whole Presbytery. The present physical equipment at Smyrna Camp Ground owes much to his planning and efforts.

The relocation of populations, the enlarging industries in the towns, the new hope arising in formerly quiet churches, the new residential areas to be occupied, all demanded consideration by the Home Mission Committee. At the same time, the demands of Religious Education and Young People's work became heavier. The Presbytery therefore arranged for a division of the labors,¹⁹ and called the Rev. Franklin C. Talmage to become the Superintendent of Home Missions,²⁰ at the same time setting up a separate department of Religious Education.²¹ The changes called for a new type of Home Mission endeavor.

Growing cities and towns invited new and concentrated efforts. Rural areas, depleted of population, required a new appraisal of

18. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Jan. 31, 1924.

19. Ibid.—July 14, 1937.

20. Ibid.—May 31, 1837.

21. Ibid.—July 14, 1937.

their work. Churches of limited program and activity in reviving towns demanded a more favorable competitive position. New resources in the hands of membership were being made available. There were still unchurched areas of population. Some churches, in order to render a better service required separation from a group. There was need for the erection of church buildings, for the provision of additional manses, and for improved facilities for the church's training efforts. The use of manpower in an age of automobiles and good roads must be made more effective. An administration was needed to stimulate churches to carry their own financial load, for the securing of new funds for enlarged construction, for the adaptation of church life to a new age, and for the reducing of the periods of vacancy which are so hurtful in the life of the church.

The action of the Presbytery twenty years ago in confining the work of the superintendent to the field of Church Extension has been fully justified in the later results. During the succeeding period, twenty-three new churches have been organized,²² twenty-five churches have assumed their own full support, twenty-six new church buildings have been erected by mission churches, five church buildings have been completely remodeled and enlarged, thirty manses have been acquired by purchase or erection, and twenty auxiliary building units have been added for departmental purposes. The number of churches whose doors are open for Gospel preaching each Sunday has increased from 35 to 82. With more frequent worship opportunities, with ministers more accessible to the parishes, with better equipment, with fewer prolonged vacancies, and always under the blessing of the Spirit of God, the churches in which Presbytery has made investment and which struggled through difficult days "are coming again rejoicing bringing their sheaves with them." This is the Presbytery of Atlanta at work in the field of Church Extension.

Since the writing of the above paragraphs, Dr. Talmage has retired from the active work of the Presbytery and has been succeeded by the Rev. Bonneau H. Dickson, D.D., to whom reference has been made earlier. New churches have been added to the family of the Presbytery of Atlanta. New sites are being acquired and new buildings are being erected. The promise is great. The able leadership of Dr. Dickson gives encouragement to the churches, and brings promise of an ever widening future.

22. See Appendix, List of Churches with dates of organization.

VII

At Work



5. SMYRNA CAMP GROUND

WHAT was Camp Smyrna? Was it a couple of rows of cottages, irregular in pattern, built close together, and needing paint? Was it a grove of oak trees, about 30 miles from Atlanta, where the soil had been worn bare by the trample of many feet for a century? Was it an ancient weather-beaten open tabernacle with a metal roof where pattering rain stopped the ears? Was it these things or was it something else?

Was it not a place away from the conventionalities of normal life, where for a week hundreds of young people met under happy surroundings of play and kindred activities, where they enjoyed fine wholesome fellowship under Christian auspices in association with ministers and lay-workers, and where they learned the fundamental ideas of the faith and shared in the same influences of the Spirit which for a century have made Smyrna sacred?

Was it not a place where many hearts made the first voluntary moves toward Christ, where young people have tasted the joys of Christian service, where youth upon the threshold of life has heard the call for a full-time Christian service, where ministers have touched the heart of youth, and where young people's societies have found new life?

Even before this spot echoed with the shouts and laughter of youth and heard their whispered prayers, it felt the manifestations of grace among the sturdy pioneers who retreated for a few days from the toils and heartaches of life. They were there from Bethany,

McDonough, Social Circle as well as from the Smyrna community, when the windows of heaven were opened, and men great in the Lord had come to dwell among them for a few days to declare His truth. Here parents came on occasions of high emotion to dedicate their infants to the Lord,¹ and where even Negro slaves brought their children for Christian baptism.²

How did Smyrna come to be? Because fifteen persons gathered at the home of John and Alexander Stewart in 1827 to organize a church,³ because God's ministers, Wilson, Kirkpatrick and Dickson, nourished the church as occasion afforded.⁴ They had built a log church building about three miles away, in DeKalb County,⁵ even erecting a few tents for temporary use.⁶ The water supply proved unsatisfactory and the land too rolling.⁶ Within a few years the larger following among the people settled near the present hallowed spot, leading to the removal of the meeting-house. Mr. Aaron Hollingsworth, one of the members of Smyrna Church, was willing for its sake to part with some of his land, and on Christmas day in 1840, for the sum of \$22.50 sold five acres, containing a wooded grove and a good spring, to the elders of the church.⁷

Smyrna Camp Ground is there because the early saints found a "four-day meeting" profitable to their souls, and deemed it worthy of repetition. It was there because the Rev. John S. Wilson, in 1845, proposed that a series of group camp meetings be held in the various sections of the Presbytery, and suggested one group for Bethany, McDonough, Social Circle and Smyrna Churches.⁸ This first joint meeting was held near to Smyrna "meeting house," where, according to a prevailing tradition, a "brush arbor" had been set up. There occurred a delightful visitation of divine grace, resulting in the reception into the churches of seven white persons and one colored person.⁹ So moved were all the people by the experience that they determined to meet again the following year. God manifested himself again, and this year 21 persons were added to the churches.¹⁰ From that year forward, each summer saw its meeting

1. Sessional Records of Smyrna Church—Sept. 22, 1846.

2. Ibid.—Oct. 25, 1845.

3. Quigg, *Historic Smyrna*.

4. Sessional Record of Smyrna Church.

5. *Charleston Observer*—Apr. 21, 1838. (The cemetery remains.)

6. Statement of L. G. Brantley, Lithonia, Ga. (86 years of age in 1951).

7. See deed of Smyrna church.

8. Minutes of the Presbytery of Flint River—Apr. 2, 1845.

9. Sessional Records of Smyrna church—Oct. 25, 1845.

10. Ibid.—Sept. 16, 1846.

at Smyrna. In 1848, a sense of permanence was felt, and Mrs. Ann Stowers, with more devotion than education, deeded three and three-quarters acres of adjoining land to the elders of the church for \$22.50, and fixed her mark.¹¹ Treasured tradition has it that at first a small frame shelter was erected for summer use, and later the present "tabernacle" was constructed. The age of the tabernacle goes back beyond the memory of any living person, and may be judged by the pinned mortise joints and by the notched braces. Following the building of the tabernacle came the rows of "tents" belonging to the various families. Whatever tents may have been at the beginning, they later appear as cabins of a semi-permanent nature, in which the members of the congregation lived for the duration of the encampment. Camp meeting time was important in the church's annual program, and became also a time of reunion for many former members who had moved away. Common tradition is that there has been, save for one or two years during the War Between the States, an annual camp meeting for over a century.¹²

One of the oldest residents living at this time recalls his first visit, when he was taken at the age of about seven (1872) to Camp Smyrna by Dr. J. P. Rosser, upon whose place he was living. He recalls his impressions of the "Tabernacle" which was then standing, and the method of lighting the grounds. Within the tabernacle tallow candles were used. Without, he described the method of lighting as follows: At each of three corners of the tabernacle, four stobs were driven into the ground, and then green puncheons were brought and arranged so as to make a platform about four feet square. Upon these, dirt was piled, and in the center a hollow scooped out. In these were placed light-wood knots and lighted. It was the work of the boys about 12 years of age to gather in and pile up the light-wood knots for burning. By this light the people were able to see their way from tabernacle to tent after dark. He remembers that the early morning service was at about 9 o'clock. There followed a service at about 11 o'clock, then one at 3 in the afternoon, and the final service just after dark. He recalls a committee of young men whose duty it was to close the front door of each tent just before the beginning of service.¹³

Many changes in rural life came during the first quarter of the 20th century. The advent of the boll-weevil and the falling price of

11. See deed to Smyrna church.

12. This is a prevailing tradition in the community.

13. Statement of L. G. Brantly, Lithonia, Ga. (age 86 in 1951).

cotton turned many of the membership of Smyrna Church to other employment than farming. Decreased membership and internal difficulty led to discouragement in the church and to neglect of the property. In their extremity, in 1921, the membership turned to the Presbytery, which made an investment in repairs and improvements, thus stimulating other repairs by private owners of tents.¹⁴ Out of this interest by Presbytery grew a movement to conduct a Bible conference in connection with the Camp Meeting. This first conference was in 1922, and was attended principally by members and friends of Smyrna Church.¹⁵ The next year there was a ten-day Conference which reported 150 young people in attendance from all parts of the Presbytery.¹⁶ Those who had observed the conference were so pleased that they spontaneously moved toward a permanent conference program. The church enthusiastically wrote to the Presbytery: "The work has grown to such proportions and revealed such possibilities that it is the judgment of the Smyrna Presbyterian Church . . . that the best interests of the Kingdom . . . can be promoted by the Presbytery taking charge of the Camp Ground."¹⁷ Presbytery resolved: "That Presbytery accept the offer of the Smyrna Church to turn over their property to the Presbytery, and that we agree to conduct the Camp Meeting and Young People's Conference there annually hereafter for a least five years."¹⁸ From the time of this transfer Presbytery has maintained conferences in an ever enlarging form, and has continually improved the property. Large funds were never available, therefore improvements and enlargements have been in many smaller steps. First, came a lake and additional cabins,¹⁹ then a hotel,²⁰ then sewerage and water works which were later improved,²¹ then a swimming pool,²² then class rooms, and then a cafeteria²³ and a faculty house.²⁴ The conferences have expanded in a similar manner a step at a time from year to year. At the outset, there was an emphasized camp meeting,²⁵ and then there was a Bible conference in connection with the camp

14. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Fall 1921, p. 22.

15. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Spring 1922, p. 60.

16. Ibid.—Fall 1923, p. 37.

17. Letter from Church to Presbytery dated Oct. 30, 1923.

18. Minutes of the Atlanta Presbytery—Fall 1923, p. 41.

19. Ibid.—Fall 1924, p. 42.

20. Ibid.—Spring 1926, p. 47.

21. Ibid.—Spring 1927, p. 46.

22 and 24. Information from Religious Education Committee.

23. Minutes of the Atlanta Presbytery—Spring 1941, p. 34.

25. Ibid.—Fall 1921, p. 22.

meeting.²⁶ Then was added a young people's feature.²⁷ By 1926, the camp meeting and conferences were separated and held at different times.²⁸ By 1929, two conferences were held: Pioneers and Young People.²⁹ Since then Training Schools, a Superintendents' Conference, and Young Adults' conference have been added.

No one can ever estimate the influence of this Smyrna ground from the first days of simple warm devotion to the large and effective program of the Presbytery. The camp meeting feature was returned to the supervision of the Smyrna Church in 1928 to bring annual blessing to its membership. The grounds became a place of retreat for small groups from various churches. Each year it has been a place of decision for numbers of young people. They have pondered deeply the call of Christ to their souls, and some have become his ministers and missionaries at home and abroad. Most of the churches of Presbytery have felt the influence of the streams of Christian life which have sprung from Smyrna. The conference program is now an essential part of Presbytery's life that it dare not do without.

COMMITTEE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The development of the Smyrna Conference is but typical of the development within the Presbytery of all phases of Sunday School work, of young people's work and other training programs. It was this growing interest that led the Presbytery in 1937 to establish a separate Committee of Religious Education (now Christian Education), and to charge it with responsibility for discovering someone competent to lead its activities.³⁰ Their choice fell upon the Rev. Harold C. Smith, then pastor of the Woodlawn Church of Atlanta.³¹ He proved himself a consecrated man, genial in his manner, guileless in his spirit and unselfish in his relationships. He is still loved by the young people of the Presbytery, and respected by all who are interested in its training program. He became the Director of Religious Education in 1938,³¹ and continued to serve until 1954.

This committee has had a wide and varied influence. It has stimulated a fellowship among young people in Christian life and service. It has been aggressive in all that relates to Sunday Schools. It

26. Ibid.—Spring 1922, p. 60.

27. Ibid.—Fall 1923, p. 37.

28. Ibid.—Fall 1925, p. 38.

29. Ibid.—Spring 1929, p. 46.

30. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—July 14, 1937.

31. Ibid.—Mar. 7, 1938.

has offered counsel to superintendents in their association. It has provided training courses for teachers. It has encouraged efficient organization. It has provided materials and equipment for the workers. The committee has participated in the efforts to relate young adults to Christ and His Kingdom, in the family, in the world's work, and in the church. It has promoted and trained workers for vacation schools. It has furnished courses in women's work, in men's work, and in the work of the Presbyterian officer. It has been the directing agency of the Smyrna Conferences. In the field of audio-visual education, it has acquired equipment, a limited library, and is prepared to render help and counsel. This is Presbytery at Work in the field of Religious Education with its broad field and numerous services. For the first sixteen years this committee knew but one Director, the versatile Mr. Smith.

With the beginning of 1954, after Mr. Smith had relinquished the leadership of the work to become Minister of Education at Central Church, the Committee turned to Dr. Archie C. Ray to become the Director, and the work now moves forward under his direction.

Of special significance, under the administration of Dr. Ray, was the relocation and enlargement of the conference grounds. Since Presbytery's first conference held at Smyrna in 1922, there has been an increase of 150 per cent in the total membership of the churches. It is understandable that the grounds and equipment were proving inadequate to the enlarged needs, and the future could be expected to make even larger demands. Hazards to the life and health of the large numbers in attendance were giving concern. The solution was seen in the relocation and enlargement of the grounds and in the provision of a plant broadly designed for all the present needs and which would allow for the expanding calls of the future. Accordingly, a site at the southern end of Fayette County was selected, which included about 550 acres of land and which possessed the physical features desirable in a conference ground. The area was beautified by simple grading, by a lake, roads and a pool, attractive and adequate structures were erected to meet the immediate needs of the first conferences to be held in 1960, and a resident director was called to guide the program. A Presbytery at Work thus paid its tribute to the past and moved toward an ever growing future in its work of Christian Education.

VII

At Work



6. COLUMBIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT DECATUR

NO ATTEMPT is being made here to write a running history of Columbia Theological Seminary. Dr. William's Childs Robinson¹ and Dr. Louis C. LaMotte² have both made careful study and have told effectively the story of the seminary. The purpose of this volume is to tell the story of the Presbytery of Atlanta, and therefore an institution is considered only insofar as it is related thereto. Columbia Seminary from its origin has held a place of vital importance. Dr. Goulding, its founder, was at the same time a member of the Presbytery of Hopewell,³ whose bounds extended over our area. He was therefore familiar with many of the conditions of the frontier, and was personally acquainted with the men who served there. He attended the first meeting of Presbytery held in the New Country,⁴ and had a large part in the organization of the Education Society⁵ which assisted young men in preparation for service there. Being teacher in the Lexington Academy, his duties often prevented attendance upon meetings of Presbytery. We have referred to the first teacher; what of the first students? Of the five young men who comprised that first class in the pastor's study at Lexington, two had

1. LaMotte, *Colored Light*. (See Bibliography.)
2. Robinson, *Columbia Theological Seminary*, etc. (See Bibliography.)
3. Minutes of the Presbytery of Hopewell—1828.
4. Ibid.—Aug. 6, 1825.
5. Ibid.—May 23, 1823.

still several years of preparation.⁶ Two of the remaining three began their work in the area of the Presbytery of Atlanta, namely, Hampden C. Carter as missionary on the frontier⁷ and Isaac W. Waddel as stated supply at Decatur.⁸

Columbia Seminary was essential to the development of the frontier areas. This may be seen from a report of the Synod's society for missionary endeavor:

We almost despair of being able to do anything efficiently in the Domestic Department of our Society unless missionaries can be raised up at home. We have too long looked to the North for our supply. The many vacancies that there occur, and the vast openings to the West, are more than sufficient to employ all the ministers that can be educated at the North for more than a hundred years to come; and there seems to be little in the South inviting to our northern brethren. They dread our climate—our summers are considered as fatal to strangers. They also in general exceedingly dislike the domestic circumstances of our country, and few can reconcile it to their feelings to settle permanently in the South.⁹

This seminary which began, by permission of Synod, in the study at Lexington, was moved to Columbia, S. C. in 1830.¹⁰ It drew to its campus an increasing number of students, and to it the Presbytery turned again and again for young men to serve within its bounds. During the entire life of the Presbytery of Flint River, 19 per cent of all the ministers who served in our area were former students of Columbia.¹¹ The seminary naturally looked to our churches for financial support, and this support, though often very meager, was recognized as a proper object of benevolences. The financial agent of the seminary was frequently heard upon the floor of Presbytery. The seminary's influence increased as the years progressed. During the first quarter-century of the Presbytery of Atlanta, 25 per cent of all ministers who served were trained at Columbia.¹¹

Relation between Presbytery and seminary declined in enthusiasm in its later days at Columbia. More of Presbytery's candidates went elsewhere for their preparatory work, and support for the seminary

6. LaMotte (see classes 1829 and 1833).

7. Minutes Hopewell Presbytery—Oct. 9, 1830.

8. History of Decatur Church—1950, p. 8.

9. Thompson, *Presbyterian Missions in the Southern States*, p. 61.

10. LaMotte, *Colored Light*. (Richmond, Va. Pres. Com. of Pub.—1937, p. 35.)

11. Compare roll of ministers in Appendix with rosters in LaMotte's book.

at Columbia declined. From the days of the Donald Fraser High School there had been an expressed desire for the establishment of a high-grade Christian college for young men. There arose a movement to combine Southwestern University (Clarksville, Tenn.) and Columbia Seminary, and to establish a college and a seminary in Atlanta.¹² The movement aroused controversy and much feeling in many quarters, but failed of its aim. Interest in a university movement lingered and resulted in the establishment of Oglethorpe University.¹³ Shortly, the tie between Oglethorpe University and the Presbyterian Church weakened and interest upon the part of the Presbytery declined. In the meantime the fortunes of Columbia Seminary were uncertain. Financial support was insufficient, hindering the progress of the institution and bringing uncertainty as to its future. In this extremity, Union Theological Seminary of Richmond proposed a merger of the two institutions, and this matter was considered seriously by the Board of Directors, and was also brought into the discussions of the supporting synods.¹⁴

It was here that the proposal came for the removal of the institution to Atlanta. Dr. J. Sprole Lyons, pastor of the First Church of Atlanta, possessed a vision of the future, and was led of God at this time of destiny. Dr. Lyons was one of the recognized leaders of our church—born in Virginia, serving nearly 30 years in Kentucky, and coming to Atlanta in 1914 at the age of 53. He continued, for the 22 years that he served the First Church, his able exposition of the Scriptures and his most appreciated pastoral ministry. He was a source of strength and wisdom in all the affairs of Presbytery. He was for many years the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Columbia Seminary. His clear thinking and his energetic and effective leadership did much to promote the removal of the Seminary to Decatur. In this leadership he was ably supported by President Richard T. Gillespie, who spent the full energies of his most fruitful years in reestablishing the institution. Steps were taken in rapid succession. The Presbytery of Atlanta made representation to the Board of Directors of the Seminary, in the spring of 1924, discouraging a merger with any other seminary, and pledging "more sympathetic interest" and "more generous financial assistance."¹⁵ It then made this gesture of interest: "If a new plant seems essential to the largest measure of success for the Seminary

12. Minutes of the General Assembly—1905, p. 37.

13. Minutes of the Synod of Georgia—1916, p. 45.

14. LaMotte, *Colored Light*, p. 223.

15. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Spring 1934, p. 37.

for the future, the Presbytery of Atlanta thinks the Board should patiently consider the matter of a new site. Should it become perfectly manifest that a new site as well as a new plant would contribute to the usefulness of the Seminary, this Presbytery would gladly see the institution planted within its bounds, and is ready to lend encouragement and help to a movement of this kind."¹⁶ At the following meeting of the Board of Directors on June 13, the offer of Union Seminary was rejected, and this action was taken:

That because of its geographical position in the controlling Synods and church, its large and growing church membership, its strategic location as to the controlling Synods and Gulf Synods as well, the city of Atlanta be and is now chosen as the future home of the Seminary provided the Presbytery of Atlanta assumes the burden of providing the Seminary with a suitable site and buildings in keeping with its dignity and ample enough to care for its anticipated growth, with the right granted to use proceeds arising from the sale of its present plant for the purpose if required.¹⁷

The Presbytery of Atlanta and the Synod of Georgia were both quick to respond and enthusiastic in their action. All other Synods gave full approval.

The Presbytery began in earnest the fulfillment of its pledge and selected an Executive Committee composed of Dr. J. S. Lyons, Dr. J. B. Ficklen, and four laymen, J. S. Kennedy, J. B. Campbell, Samuel M. Inman, and C. M. Candler, Sr.¹⁸ These men brought forth a splendid demonstration of the strength of Presbyterianism. They were assisted in the financial campaign by the staff of the General Assembly's Committee on Christian Education and Ministerial Relief, who sent Dr. S. W. McGill to take charge of the endeavor.¹⁹ There was first the obtaining of a site. Several offers were made, but the evident leading was to the vicinity of Decatur. Through the generosity of the heirs of Mr. G. B. Scott, and through Mr. Ben S. Watkins, Judge John S. Candler, Mr. G. F. Willis, Mr. Ben S. Forkner and others, a beautiful wooded tract of about 50 acres was provided.²⁰ A large addition to this tract was made possible by the liberal gift of \$10,000 from Dr. and Mrs. N. P. Pratt. The tract was ample for all anticipated needs and lent itself to picturesque landscaping.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.—Fall 1924, p. 18.

18. *Atlanta Journal*—Feb. 16, 1925.

19. LaMotte, *Colored Light*, p. 225.

20. *Presbyterian Viewpoint*—Apr. 11, 1925.

It was then necessary to seek the sum of \$250,000. The first active portion of the campaign found the non-Presbyterians of Decatur at work to provide a sum of \$30,000 as a friendly gesture of good-will.²¹ A united effort of all Presbyterians proceeded in the early part of February 1925. On February 7 ministers exchanged pulpits throughout the area, and in each church the cause was presented.²² Supported by friends and the full publicity of the daily press,²³ Presbyterians of Greater Atlanta succeeded in providing a total of \$320,000, in addition to the site. The Presbyterian forces of the city were unified, and Columbia Theological Seminary turned its face toward a glorious future. The 1926 Bulletin of the Seminary spoke with new hope, stating that the "dominant idea in planning for the new home of the Columbia Seminary is that we are building for the future."²⁴ Dr. B. R. Lacy, pastor of Central Church and active in the movement, expressed himself just before the close of the campaign: "What my heart longs for is to see a stream of spiritual leadership going out from that 40 acres of land."²⁵ Dr. McGill envisioned the challenge as follows: "When Columbia Seminary is firmly established in Atlanta, it will be the center of a territory 600 miles long and 600 miles wide."²⁶

No account of the removal of the Seminary to Decatur can omit reference to Mr. J. Bulow Campbell, whom God moved to take a generous part in the effort. He made a personal subscription of \$25,000 at the opening of the campaign, and then as it advanced and the total subscribed had reached \$220,000, he made the further offer to match all further funds raised until the total should reach the sum of \$320,000. The full amount was provided and in recognition of this beneficence, the central building was called the Virginia Orme Campbell Memorial Building in memory of Mr. Campbell's mother, whose heart's desire was that her son should become a minister of the Gospel. While her hopes were not fulfilled, yet this generosity of that son contributed largely to prepare many other young men for the ministry.²⁷

Through the committee headed by Dr. E. L. Hill of Athens, the plans for the buildings were prepared and the contract signed.

21. *Atlanta Journal*—Feb. 6, 1925.

22. *Atlanta Journal*—Feb. 6, 1925.

23. *Ibid.*—Feb. 7-15, 1925.

24. *Bulletin Columbia Seminary*—1926-7, p. 54.

25. *Atlanta Journal*—Feb. 16, 1925.

26. *Presbyterian Viewpoint*—May 22, 1925.

27. *Ibid.*—Apr. 14, 1925. *Colored Light*, p. 227.

Within three days the builder, Mr. J. S. McCauley, was prepared to break ground for the construction. Friends gathered on the afternoon of September 13, 1926 at the spot where the buildings of the Seminary were to rise, and Mr. Campbell turned the first shovel of dirt.²⁸ On this occasion Dr. Lyons looked into the future and was confident that "from Atlanta the leading Presbyterian ministers of the future will go out to the churches of that section."²⁹ The buildings rose rapidly, and all steps were taken to move the Seminary from Columbia to Decatur in the fall of 1927, and to celebrate the centennial of the institution in connection with the commencement of 1928.

Dr. R. T. Gillespie was called to the Presidency of the Seminary at the time that the removal was determined.³⁰ His indefatigable labors guided the school through the period of transition. He was inaugurated at the last commencement in Columbia.³¹ He laid the plans for the new Columbia of the future, and lived only two years after the first commencement at Decatur.³² At this commencement the centennial celebration of the Seminary was observed in connection with the meeting of the General Assembly in session at the Central Church of Atlanta. The Assembly took recess at noon on Tuesday, May 22, 1928, to meet at the Seminary campus for the dedication of the Virginia Orme Campbell Memorial Building.³³

Dormitories and faculty homes rose in rapid succession. The number of faculty homes has been steadily increased. Following the close of the second world war, the Federal Government made possible the erection of several sections of temporary student housing to accommodate veterans and their families. The women of the several Synodical Auxiliaries joined their efforts to provide apartment units to be occupied by Missionaries on furlough, who plan to study at the Seminary. In the summer of 1951, construction began on the long needed library building, and also upon the extension of the administration building which would provide additional dormitory space. This continued extension and improvement of the physical properties was also accompanied by an increase in the endowment funds, and by the enlargement of the faculty and the number of courses offered. The enrollment made its steady advances from the 60 listed in 1928 to over 240 in 1960.

28. Photograph in *Colored Light*, p. 224. *Atlanta Journal*—Sept. 11, 1926.

29. *Atlanta Journal*—Sept. 14, 1926.

30, 31 and 32. LaMotte, *Colored Light*, p. 217.

33. Minutes of the General Assembly—1928, p. 32.

Upon the death of Dr. Gillespie, the responsibility for administration fell upon the vice-president, Dr. Melton Clark, who served for about two years.³⁴ The Board of Directors then called to the presidency the Rev. James McDowell Richards, who was the pastor of the church at Thomasville, Ga.³⁵ He has proved himself eminently fitted for the task of leading the Seminary into its enlarged place in the life of the church. He brought to the presidency a rich scholastic preparation. He was a son of the manse, and therefore from infancy steeped in the life of the church. His service in rural and urban pastorates had acquainted him with the demands made upon the ministry under the varied conditions. He brought a humility of spirit, a judicial mind, a sympathy with young men and a deep devotion to Christ his Redeemer. The Lord's work has prospered in his hands. Succeeding developments have well justified the Board of Directors in their selection.

It would be in keeping with the purpose of this volume to point out the significance of the removal of the Seminary to Decatur. An institution, which possessed a warm tradition of almost a century, but which occupied inadequate buildings and struggled to free itself from annually recurring deficits, gained a new vision of the future. It now occupied new and suitable buildings capable of extension, and felt the thrill of ever growing enrollments. A growing constituency brought increased support. The religious opportunities of a metropolitan center afforded varied and helpful experiences for men in training. It opened practical channels of Christian service for students eager to be at work for their Master. The Seminary itself was equipped to provide students with a broader training, and to offer wider acquaintance with ministers active in the life of the church. From the standpoint of the Presbytery, the Seminary contributed much to the life of the churches where many students were engaged in Sunday School teaching, in the direction of young people, in participation in the leadership of music, in stimulating missionary interest, in bringing to bear the influence of young consecrated manhood upon the youth of the churches, and in supplying pulpits as occasion offered.

One may say confidently that the very presence of the Seminary has had the effect of calling the ministry as a vocation to the attention of many of the young men of the churches, and as a result the number of candidates for the ministry in the Presbytery of Atlanta

34. Ministerial Directory. See Melton Clark.

35. LaMotte, *Colored Light*, p. 221.

has greatly increased. The presence of the members of the faculty has edified the churches of the Presbytery. Their voices have frequently sounded from the pulpits. They have guided churches through periods of vacancy. They have spoken to church groups upon a great variety of subjects, and they have offered their services in instruction in training classes. The entire work of the Presbytery is stronger for the coming of the Seminary. The availability of a large group of students in training has eliminated the vacant church. The influence of the Seminary may be most clearly seen when one inquires into the personnel who make up the membership of the Presbytery of Atlanta and discovers that one half of all the ministers in the great Presbytery at Work are graduates of Columbia Seminary.³⁶

36. Compare list of ministers enrolled in Presbytery with the catalogs of Columbia Seminary.

VII

At Work



7. ENLARGED ACTIVITIES

WHEN our Lord began to announce his thoughts concerning the church, he declared, "Ye are the light of the world." There was the thought of the world in which his disciples should live, and there was a relation they should bear toward that world. The course of the Presbytery's life can be understood only against the movements of the world in which it served. There was certainly the facing of the world-old problem of sin. In appraising the conditions within the Presbytery of Atlanta, one is definitely aware that the prince of this world has not abdicated, but on the other hand, the church in the world has made it a little brighter, and living in it more desirable for all.

These 45 years (1915-60) were marked by certain influencing factors: (1) The Presbytery saw a growing textile industry. Its coming affected the entire economic life of the section, and was reflected in the development of the churches. The report of the Committee on Home Missions stated in 1915: "Perhaps no county in our Presbytery is developing faster than Troup. Over \$1,500,000 is being spent in this county in cotton-mill construction."¹ Other counties were similarly affected. (2) The Presbytery faced war. World war twice demanded the attention of the people and called for the enlistment of their sons. During the first world war Camp Gordon was located on the northern outskirts of Atlanta. These wars brought to the Presbytery strains upon its people, the absence

1. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Sept. 15, 1915.

of young men from its communities, the presence of lonely men away from home, sorrows following casualties, diverting interests, interruption of building plans, the declining value of the dollar, and the lax moral conditions associated with war. During both wars, the church brought its message of hope; it prayed for its sons who were absent and endeavored to help the sons of others who were present. It declared God to be a refuge and a very present help. (3) The Presbytery faced a period of distressing economic depression. It endeavored to steady men as they passed through business crisis. It struggled to carry its own financial obligations. It saw its own income shrink from year to year and trembled for its benevolent causes. It shared its people's joy as they came through. (4) The Presbytery faced prosperity. There were two periods of expanding economy, when the church found opportunity to realize some of its long anticipated desires, and when it was called upon to lead its people into a new stewardship, calling upon them to share with the Lord their new prosperity. These were the large factors which determined the course of the Presbytery in this period.

THE PRESBYTERY OF ATLANTA AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Presbytery has always had its part in the life of the Assembly. By geographical location and by the convenience of railroad and air transportation the city of Atlanta came to hold more and more a central place in the church. It drew the attention of the general agencies of the church and became the choice of the church at large for many of the central offices. The Assembly's Committee of Home Missions had many years before opened its offices in Atlanta that it might be more accessible to the church.² The same consideration brought the Committee on Stewardship and Men's Work in 1928.³ In 1931, the Committee on Woman's Work moved its central office to Atlanta.⁴ There followed the departments of Evangelism, Radio, and Negro Work in succession about 1946.⁵ The Program of Progress forces came in 1947. The Office of the General Assembly was moved in 1949,⁶ and then was added to that

1. Minutes of Presbytery of Atlanta—Sept. 15, 1915.

2. See Section VI, Chapter 7.

3. Minutes of General Assembly. (Compare 1927 and 1928).

4. *Ibid.*—1931, p. 53.

5. *Ibid.* (See Committee List 1947.)

6. *Ibid.*—1949, p. 53.

department the office of the Minister and His Work in 1951.⁷ Lastly, through the instrumentality of certain active laymen under the leadership of Mr. Charles J. Currie, a Deacon of the First Church, the Presbyterian Center was established, a Presbyterian Book-Store was introduced, And the Board of Annuities and Relief came to Atlanta in 1954.

Atlanta has proved a convenient point for the meetings of the Assembly. In addition to the initial Convention for the planning of the first General Assembly,⁸ six meetings have been held in Atlanta.⁹ The fourth meeting was held in 1928 in the Central Church, the fifth in 1948 in the First Church and the sixth in 1959 in the Druid Hills Church.¹⁰ Exclusive of the Montreat Conference grounds, the General Assembly has chosen most often to come to Atlanta. Five times the Presbytery has been honored in the choice of Moderator,¹¹ four times during this recent period, namely, in Dr. R. C. Reed, a member of the faculty of Columbia Seminary, in 1922, in Hon. Willis M. Everett, an invaluable member of the Assembly's Home Mission Committee, in 1938, in Dr. J. R. McCain, President of Agnes Scott College, in 1951, and in Dr. J. McDowell Richards, President of Columbia Seminary, in 1955. No other Presbytery has been more often honored. Besides lending its Ministers and Ruling Elders to serve as Moderator, it has made them available in many capacities at the call of the Assembly.¹³

UNITED EFFORTS OF THE PRESBYTERY

Brief reference will be made to a variety of enterprises undertaken by Presbytery working as a unit. In other chapters, note has been taken of the work of Religious Education, of Home Missions, and of Columbia Seminary. It need but be mentioned here that reorganization of the General Assembly was reflected each time in the reorganization of the Presbytery. The creation of the Committee on Assembly's Work in 1928 brought that same year a Committee on Presbytery's Work. The Assembly abandoned the plan in 1931; the Presbytery followed in 1934. The Assembly reorganized its structure in 1950. The same year Presbytery organized to correspond.¹⁴

7. Ibid.—1951, p. 56.

8. See Section IV, Chapter 2.

9. Ibid. (See Lists of Moderators.)

10. Ibid. (See Lists of Moderators.)

11. See Minutes of Assembly (List of Moderators).

13. Minutes of the General Assembly. (See Committee lists.)

14. Compare Minutes of General Assembly and of Presbytery for years noted.

Two missionary endeavors of Presbytery are here set forth. In late November in 1915, the Woman's Auxiliary of the Presbytery saw opportunity for a service among the Syrian people living not far from the Capitol in Atlanta. Enthusiasm prevailed and a mission was planned. A special committee of the Auxiliary, led by Mrs. Wm. T. Elder of the First Church, gave direction to the work. It engaged Miss Clemmie Patton of Decatur to pioneer the work. Mission activities included a Sunday School, a Boys' Club, a Girls' Club, a Kindergarten, a Sewing School and an English class, all led by volunteer workers. Miss Helen Burbanks became the resident Superintendent. One of the immediate results was that several persons from the mission united with the Moore Memorial and Central churches.¹⁵ The Mission was maintained for nearly 20 years—or until the Syrian population had scattered and the complexion of the neighborhood changed. It then became known as "The Chapel," and continued a service to the new people who moved in. Here the students of Agnes Scott College and Columbia Seminary took active part.¹⁶ When the Capitol Homes replaced the former dilapidated property, the mission was closed to make way for the Central Church to serve the new people who occupied the "Homes." A backward glance reveals that the mission was sponsored for a year or two by the Woman's Auxiliary in conjunction with the Assembly's Committee of Home Missions. Later the Presbytery shared in the work. Still later the mission was turned over entirely to the Presbytery, which directed it under changing conditions, until it was merged with the parish of Central Church. Even from the beginning, however, a spiritual oversight was taken by the Session of that church.

The second mission enterprise was the reestablishment of work among Negroes. In the spring of 1919, Presbytery's Committee of Home Missions announced, "In cooperation with the Assembly's Committee of Home Missions and the Central Presbyterian Church" it had planned the "establishment of a mission among the Negroes along the lines of the work carried out so successfully . . . in Louisville, Ky. Mr. Graham F. Campbell, a member of the senior class of Union Theological Seminary has been called to take charge of the work."¹⁷ Mr. Campbell came to Atlanta in July, and with his coming a special committee of Presbytery was erected to

15. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—April 12, 1916.

16. Ibid.—Spring 1939, p. 31.

17. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Spring 1919, p. 31.

direct the work.¹⁸ Mr. Campbell was ordained to the ministry¹⁹ and also began his work in the Negro church building located at 216 Fraser Street, and which was held by the Trustees of Central Church. An organized mission resulted, known as the "Presbyterian Colored Mission," and including such features as Kindergarten, Sunday School, Boys' and Girls' Clubs, Sewing Schools for Girls and Women, and Christian Endeavor.²⁰ Time suggested a new location, and a site at the corner of Mary and Coleman Streets was acquired for a mission, which became the Pittsburgh Mission. The program of the Fraser Street Mission was reproduced at the Pittsburgh Mission, and in a short time the latter mission replaced the former.²¹ The first meeting was held on September 5, 1920 in what is now the Rice Memorial manse.²² On the adjoining vacant lot the present building was erected, and first used on Easter Sunday of 1924.²³ While steps were under way for the erection of a building, plans were also being made for the engaging of a Negro minister. Rev. A. D. Wilkinson, a Negro minister from Mobile, came to Atlanta temporarily to assist in the work.²⁴ On December 1, 1923, the Rice Memorial Church was organized,²⁵ and named in honor of Dr. Theron Rice, former pastor of Central Church, who was greatly interested in work among Negroes.²⁶ Rev. George W. Gideon came on January 1, 1924 to become pastor, and served the church for over 25 years.²⁷ Mr. Campbell had effectively begun the work and remained with it until the Fraser Street Mission was discontinued and the Rice Memorial Church was well established with Mr. Gideon settled as Pastor. Mr. Campbell then left to take other work, and the Committee of Negro Work was merged with the Committee of Home Missions.²⁸ The names of three laymen are outstanding in the service, Dr. Paul F. Brown, Mr. L. D. Strouss, and Dr. Gillespie Enloe. To Mr. Gideon belongs the praises of the churches for a life above all reproach, for a faithful understanding

18. Ibid.—Fall 1919, p. 30.

19. Ibid.—July 21, 1919.

20. Ibid.—Spring 1920, p. 38.

21. Fraser Street Mission does not appear after the 1924 report.

22. Annual Report of Colored Work—Spring 1925. Missionary Survey—Jan. 21, p. 38.

23. Minutes of Atlanta Presbytery. Report on Colored Work Spring 1925.

24. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Spring 1923, p. 55.

25. Sketch of Negro Work by Miss Azile Simpson.

26. *Missionary Survey*—Dec. 1922.

27. (See 25 above) Report of Negro Work by G. W. Gideon to Committee in 1924.

28. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—1925.

ministry in Atlanta of 26 years, and for his patient uplifting influence among his people. Mention has already been made of the younger but corresponding work in Decatur;²⁹ and of Westhills Church in Atlanta.²⁹

Three organizations appeared that were related to the Presbytery: The Church and Manse Building League was formed in the fall of 1918, with the purpose of soliciting a large number of volunteer members who would pay small semi-annual dues to assist in meeting the object expressed in the motto: "Every Church its Own House of Worship and Every Pastor and Our Evangelist a Manse." While some funds were provided through this means, enthusiasm did not continue and the plan passed into disuse.³⁰ A second organization that appeared in the spring of 1918 was the "Farmers Missionary Union." This was a plan to stimulate benevolent giving. Under it men promised the proceeds from an acre of land and the women all the eggs that were laid on Sunday. The funds were to be divided between the work of Foreign Missions and Presbyterian Home Missions. For several years the plan was effective, and served to provide funds for the mission causes and to make the rural churches aware of their responsibility for the benevolent causes.³¹ The third organization was the Christian Helpers' League. With the closing of the "red-light district" in Atlanta, a group of Presbyterian men became conscious of a responsibility to the down-and-outs. To serve drifting men, this organization was created, with a regularly contributing membership. They established a mission center at the corner of Washington and Decatur Streets, prepared to house about 40 men. Mr. William Holland and his wife were placed in charge. Leaders in the movement were Mr. Woods White, Mr. Marion Jackson, Mr. John J. Eagan, Mr. W. D. Beatie, Mr. J. R. Bachman and others. A warehouse was obtained for the gathering of old rags and papers, about which to employ the men. The mission was prepared to provide a bath, clean clothes, a meal and a bed. The city probation officer, Mr. Coogler, assigned his men to the mission and lent large cooperation. Regular religious services were maintained. The mission was in operation until Prohibition was adopted. With its coming drifting men disappeared from the streets, and the mission was closed for want of patrons.³²

29. See Section VII, Chapter 1.

30. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 19, 1918.

31. Ibid.—Spring 1920, p. 37.

32. Information of J. R. Bachman, Decatur, Ga. (Compare Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Spring 1920, p. 25.)

At previous times the Presbytery had considered the matter of incorporation, but had rejected it.³³ Now it appeared that an active Presbytery, whose enterprises would increasingly require the holding of property, should protect such property by orderly management. It therefore took all necessary steps to obtain a charter, and such was granted on April 3, 1920.³⁴ Two years later By-Laws were found necessary and were appended to the Charter.³⁵

The Presbytery celebrated in 1942 the 75th Anniversary of its life, with a twelve-month program having these objectives:

A year of special public, private, and family prayer, in the light of the desperate world situation.

An increased consideration of the Bible and its study as furnishing the only light for a darkened world.

A presentation of the claims of the Gospel Ministry in every church in the Presbytery, seeking the cooperation of Columbia Seminary.

Evangelistic aims which would set a goal for the Presbytery of 1000 additions upon profession of faith, and seek to have no church without such additions.

Every church with some advance in its support of the program of Benevolence.

At the Spring meeting of 1942, the year to be closed by some special historical observance.³⁶

During the last half of the year by courtesy of WGST a series of radio programs were presented, setting forth phases of the work of the Presbyterian Church. The Woman's Auxiliary at its annual meeting commemorated the occasion by a review of its work through the years. The Presbytery presented in Presser Hall of Agnes Scott College an Historical Pageant "Up from the Ashes," written by Dr. D. P. McGeachy and presented by Ministers of the Presbytery and others. This pageant recalled the first meeting of the Presbytery. It portrayed a scene of a Christian home of the day. It suggested the thoughts of ministers in those difficult days and pointed out some of the influences of Presbyterianism. Dr. Walter L. Lingle came to speak on the subject, "Presbyterianism and Human Freedom." Dr. Frank H. Caldwell of Louisville Seminary closed the celebration at a "Victory Banquet" by an appeal to the men of the churches for a new dedication.³⁷

33. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Apr. 15, 1913.

34. Ibid.—Apr. 14, 1920.

35. LaMotte, *Colored Light*, p. 221.

36. Ibid.—Spring 1941, p. 19.

37. Program of Historical Pageant dated April 21, 1942.

Interest of laymen in the work of the church has grown with the years. This has been specially and recently true in the field of Evangelism. As a means of training its men, Presbytery planned, for the winter of 1947, a united effort in a School of Home Visitation Evangelism. The Rev. Marc C. Weersing of the Oakhurst Church had become convinced of the benefits to be derived from such a school and had introduced the idea to the Presbyterian Ministers' Association of Atlanta. Dr. H. H. Thompson, the Assembly's Secretary of Evangelism, was called in for counsel. Following this consideration, the services of Dr. Guy Black of the Methodist Board of Evangelism were enlisted to lead such a school. At the Fall meeting in 1946 Presbytery endorsed the plan and invited the Presbytery of North and South Carolina of the Synod of Snedecor Memorial to participate.³⁸ Already the Second Presbytery of Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church and the Presbytery of Chattanooga of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. had joined in the plans. An executive committee was created of which the Rev. C. A. Thompson, of the faculty of Columbia Seminary, was made chairman. The plan contemplated activity in every Presbyterian Church in and about Greater Atlanta, both in the enlistment of membership and in the training of visitors. To enlarge the results, an invitation was extended to all students of Erskine and Columbia Seminaries to share the experience and training. Ministers of nearby Synods were also invited to participate. This school assembled in Atlanta a large group of ministers and students, numbering about 250. Nine hundred laymen were enlisted to become visitors. The effort was inaugurated on January 12 with a great Sunday afternoon mass meeting addressed by Dr. Black, and filling the North Avenue Church auditorium. Visiting ministers were assigned for service among the churches. There were periods of instruction each morning and visitation each night for a period of four days. There was great enthusiasm in the effort and a response that seemed almost miraculous. In the weeks immediately following, there were gathered into the churches approximately 1,000 persons by transfer of letters, 175 on reaffirmation and nearly 500 persons upon profession of faith. The story has been told in detail in a pamphlet prepared by Rev. C. A. Thompson, titled, "A Digest of the Atlanta School of Visitation Evangelism."³⁹ This school had results far beyond the local area in stimulating other similar efforts, in pro-

38. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Oct. 9, 1946.

39. Thompson, *Atlanta School of Home Visitation Evangelism*.

viding experienced men for leadership, and in leading to the establishment in churches of a continuing program of visitation evangelism.

Mention is made of interest in students attending local institutions of Higher Learning. Presbytery created a committee for service to them, known as the Committee on Student Work, which later became a part of the Christian Education Committee.⁴⁰ The committee called to become Minister to Students the Rev. D. M. Brown,⁴¹ who was succeeded by the Rev. Kirk Nesbit in the summer of 1955.⁴²

EFFORTS OF PARTICULAR CHURCHES

Of far reaching results was the removal of the First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta from the location it had occupied for nearly 60 years to its present location. The expanding of a great city and the establishment of large places of business at its center had driven the population outward. The First Church found its location disadvantageous, and had considered a new location. At the coming of Dr. Lyons steps were taken to move northward to a lot that had been purchased at the corner of Peachtree Street and Sixteenth Street. Immediate plans were made to erect a Sunday School building, which was completed in 1915, when this Sunday School building became the place for all worship services. Shortly thereafter plans were made to erect a church sanctuary, and this was dedicated on April 6, 1919. To Dr. Lyons should be given credit for foresight in the use of radio in worship. In 1922, Station WSB extended to the First Church its radio facilities for the Sunday morning services, which have been continued to the present day.⁴²

Unique in its ministry is the Baby Clinic of the Central Church. During the pastorate of Dr. B. R. Lacy in the year 1922 under the leadership of Mr. John J. Eagan the clinic was opened. The Mothers' Class of the Sunday School and Dr. R. G. McAliley gave assistance, and their support was essential to the success of the enterprise. Mrs. Ralph Nolan, a registered nurse, was the first full-time director. It has been open for patients on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and many women of Central have given volunteer assistance through the years. Assisting on the staff have been many of the finest specialists in Atlanta. Its service has been offered to babies

40. Minutes of the Presbytery of Atlanta—Fall 1948, p. 26.

41. Ibid.—Oct. 18, 1949.

42. Ibid.—Fall 1955, p. 29.

42. *Century of Life and Service* (Pamphlet of Central Church).

between birth and six years of age whose parents were unable financially to provide medical care for them. About 4,000 treatments are given each year. All the work of the clinic is done under religious influences, each clinic session opening with a religious service. This clinic has done much to hold the Central Church together and to give to its membership opportunity for a satisfying Christian service. Possibly as many as 18,000 children have been made stronger by the ministry of this clinic, and as many parents hold a kindlier feeling toward the Christian church.⁴³

This work at Central is but one of the many services of a great downtown church which refused to abandon the heart of the city. Dr. Stuart R. Oglesby was its pastor for 25 years. His gift for organization, his appreciation of the ministry of a downtown church, and his cooperation with the spiritual forces at work for the well-being of the city have made Central a great influence for good. Ministers and churches have frequently sought the counsel of Dr. Oglesby so that the entire Presbytery has received large benefit from his presence at Central.

In more recent years, during summers, two of the churches, North Avenue and Central, use their equipment and the interest of their staff and members for the conduct of "Day Camps," in conjunction with the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. This offered, under wholesome conditions, a recreational outlet for many children whose lives might be otherwise very barren.

To list here the manifold services of all the churches would be impossible. To tell of the kindergartens at Carrollton, at LaGrange, at Decatur and at Atlanta First Churches, of the youth center at Morningside, of the retreat of the young people of Peachtree Road Church at Rutledge and of the men of Central at Koweeta, and of the summer camp-program of Westminster Church is beyond the scope of this volume.

One unifying influence in Presbyterian life, which has been of peculiar significance has been the Presbyterian Officers' Association of Atlanta. In existence for over three decades, and growing in numbers from about 875 in 1925 to nearly 2,000 in 1960, it has brought Presbyterian officers to view the life of the churches as one. All officers of Presbyterian churches in metropolitan Atlanta automatically become members. Meetings held three or four times a year for supper and fellowship have made officers of Atlanta churches acquainted with one another. They have found courage

43. Leaflets of Central Church.

in service by their sense of solidarity. They have considered together major interests of the church. They have become acquainted with many persons of wide service in the denomination. The Association has brought in a large degree, the strength of the leadership of the churches to the support of every united move to which the church at large has addressed itself. The most significant united effort of the Presbyterian Officers' Association has been the Atlanta expansion program of recent years, to which reference has already been made.⁴⁴

Thus is suggested the wide variety of activities in the churches of a Presbytery at Work.

44. Section VII, Chapter 1.

STRENGTH OF THE
PRESBYTERY OF ATLANTA
as seen in 1960

Number of Churches	95
Number of Ministers	118
Whole Number of Communicants	36,000
Number of Sunday Schools	95
Sunday School Enrollment	28,141
Total Gifts to Benevolences	\$905,783
Churches Holding Services Each Sabbath	85
Churches Added to the Roll in the Period 1915-60	39
Churches Erased from the Roll	12

Conclusion



OUR narrative has brought us to the present. Yet all that has been told is but the preface to tomorrow. The conclusion must be wrought out in the lives and deeds of those yet to come. Let us sit and permit our thoughts to take wing. How shall we estimate the influence exerted upon the surrounding world by the more than 120,000 persons who as members of our churches at various times let their light shine? What have the churches meant to their lives and their homes? Those 150 ministers who heard the call of God in our churches and who are now preaching the Gospel, what of them? In village, town and city, in neglected places in our own land, in lands abroad, in college class-room and on seminary campus, they are leading people to know God. They have graced the moderator's chair and have been awarded high honors. Who may appraise the lasting effect upon young life of Presbytery's sons and daughters who have dedicated their talents in the field of Christian education? Even those ten brief years of the hospital's life, what may be the story of pain relieved, of new courage instilled, or of training for the sickroom? We cannot forget the chaplains serving the armed forces who have brought counsel and encouragement to young men and women in their loneliness, fears and temptations. What shall we say of the great host of organized women who have blessed home and community with their manifold services? What has been the impact of the consistent life and testimony of thousands of earnest elders and deacons? One might travel in his reveries to all the mission fields of the church and find the sons and daughters of Presbytery in native homes, in school, in pulpit, hospital and field, telling an old story to new listeners. Are we not justified in believing that the world is a better place because of all these varied endeavors of so many people? Can we not find wholesome satisfaction in the fact that we have been a part of it?

What of tomorrow? The church has a richer experience. It has

more adequate equipment. It embraces a larger constituency. Under the gracious influence of the abiding Spirit of God, may we not confidently expect a more glorious tomorrow? Yesterday's ventures of faith which were so productive may kindle the imagination of those who are willing to serve today or who may come tomorrow. New fields for courageous endeavor await choice spirits who dare. Past evidences of God's presence and blessing offer assurance and confidence as we move on. God still is asking, who will go?

He waits our answer.

APPENDIX

1. List of all Churches that have existed within the area. Indicating date of organization and location.
2. List of Stated Clerks of Presbytery.
3. List of Evangelists and Secretaries of Home Missions.
4. Meetings of the General Assembly within the bounds of the Presbytery of Atlanta.
5. Moderators of the General Assembly from the Presbytery of Atlanta.
6. Bibliography.
7. Index.

CHURCHES THAT HAVE EXISTED IN AREA EMBRACED BY THE PRESBYTERY OF ATLANTA

(Where known the date of organization is given, otherwise the date indicated is that of the report to Presbytery.)

ALCOVIA—Northwest corner of Walton County. (Deed Recorded.) Reported Feb. 5, 1823; dropped Oct. 11, 1889.

FAIRVIEW—First enrolled as "First Presbyterian Church of Gwinnett." Organized Aug. 9, 1823.

DECATUR—Organized Oct. 29, 1825. For two years known as "Westminster Church."

PHILADELPHIA—Organized Dec. 26, 1825.

HARMONY—Upper part of DeKalb County (exact location unknown). Reported April 9, 1826. Not listed after 1834.

JACKSON—Reported Aug. 24, 1826. Dissolved Oct. 2, 1875.

COVINGTON—Organized Jan. 21, 1827. Dissolved Oct. 8, 1847. Members to Bethany.

- SMYRNA—Organized Feb. 11, 1827. Originally in DeKalb County about two miles west of present location.
- McDONOUGH—Reported Aug. 5, 1827.
- FAYETTEVILLE—Reported Aug. 6, 1827. Merged with Union Chapel Oct. 7, 1841.
- NEWNAN—Organized June 21, 1828.
- BETHEL (Often listed as Zebulon)—Reported Aug. 1, 1828. Located about three miles southwest of Zebulon. (Deed recorded.) Dropped Oct. 2, 1868.
- FORSYTH—Reported Aug. 1, 1828. Disintegrated and reorganized Oct. 3, 1871.
- LaGRANGE—Organized March 21, 1829.
- GREENVILLE—Organized March 27, 1829.
- THOMASTON—Reported April 4, 1829. Not listed after 1835.
- CARMEL—Reported Aug. 6, 1830. In Gwinnett County, exact location unknown. Dissolved July 22, 1840. Members to Fairview.
- PROVIDENCE—Reported Nov. 18, 1831. Southeast corner of Heard County, exact location unknown. Not listed after 1837.
- GOSHEN—Organized July 26, 1834. About two miles east of present Norcross. Moved to Norcross and name changed April 20, 1889.
- UNION CHAPEL—In Fayette County about eight miles southeast of Fayetteville. (Deed recorded.) Reported March 31, 1833. Dissolved Oct. 9, 1856.
- FRIENDSHIP—Organized in July, 1835.
- LONG CANE—Date set for May 20, 1836. Located about 10 miles southwest of LaGrange. Moved to present location, name changed to Loyd Oct. 7, 1887.
- FRANKLIN—Organized in Heard County. Reported March 25, 1836. Not listed after 1843.
- WHITE OAK—Date set for Oct. 21, 1837. Located in Coweta County (present site of A.R.P. Church of same name). Moved to Turin and name changed Oct. 13, 1888. Dissolved July 29, 1938.
- WEST POINT—Organized Dec. 10, 1837 by East Alabama Presbytery. Received in Flint River April 9, 1841. Back in East Alabama from 1896-1917.
- EBENEZER—Organized Dec. 10, 1837. Located one mile east of Hogansville at present cemetery site. Now in Hogansville.
- MONROE—Reported Oct. 16, 1839. Dissolved Oct. 4, 1843. Members to Social Circle.

- ROSWELL—Organized Oct. 20, 1839. Formerly in Cherokee Presbytery. In Atlanta Presbytery since 1913.
- SALEM—In Campbell County, exact location unknown. Organized in 1840 in "New School." Recorded Oct. 5, 1842. Dropped April 5, 1867.
- GRIFFIN—Organized Nov. 27, 1841.
- CARROLLTON—Organized Dec. 18, 1841.
- BRAINERD—Organized Oct. 29, 1842. Southwest corner of Heard County. Dissolved April 13, 1882. Members to Roanoke, Alabama.
- BETHANY—Organized December 10, 1842.
- FELLOWSHIP—Organized July 7, 1843.
- SOCIAL CIRCLE—Reported Oct. 4, 1843 as Central Church of Walton County. Not listed after 1848.
- FIRST CHURCH ATLANTA—Organized Jan. 8, 1848.
- WHITE SULPHUR—Reported Oct. 8, 1856. White Sulphur Springs, Meriwether County. Dissolved Oct. 12, 1888.
- CENTRAL CHURCH ATLANTA—Organized Feb. 14, 1858. Division of First Church.
- VILLA RICA—Reported October 6, 1858.
- CONYERS—Organized July 28, 1860.
- ATLANTA COLORED CHURCH—Reported April 7, 1867. To Knox Presbytery U.S.A. Oct. 1, 1869.
- ROCK SPRING—Organized Nov. 13, 1870.
- THOMASTON—Reorganized June 27, 1871.
- BOWENVILLE—Reported April 11, 1873. Carroll County near Carrollton. Dissolved Oct. 11, 1878.
- STONE MOUNTAIN—Organized Dec. 7, 1873. Merged with Memorial Drive May 10, 1954.
- THIRD CHURCH ATLANTA—Organized March 4, 1874. Name changed to Moore Memorial Oct. 10, 1891. Dissolved Oct. 9, 1945.
- LITHONIA—Organized May 16, 1875. Dissolved April 15, 1881.
- SALEM—Organized May 30, 1875.
- MOUNT SINAI (Colored)—Organized Oct. 31, 1875. Negro membership set off from White Oak Church. Disappeared.
- HUNTER STREET CHURCH—Organized May 14, 1876. Dissolved April 26, 1879.
- MIDWAY—DeKalb County. Organized July 29, 1876.
- COVINGTON—Reorganized March 25, 1877.
- JONESBORO—Organized Sept. 29, 1879.

- ZION (Colored)—Organized Dec. 21, 1879. Dissolved Oct. 13, 1894. In Atlanta.
- TIMBER RIDGE—Organized May 30, 1880.
- FOURTH CHURCH ATLANTA—Organized June 24, 1883. Changed to Druid Park Nov. 11, 1909. Changed to DRUID HILLS Sept. 1914.
- FLAT ROCK—Organized Sept. 21, 1884. Changed to Hemphill Memorial Oct. 21, 1919.
- JACKSON—Reorganized Jan. 30, 1887.
- WEST END—Organized May 1, 1887.
- MOUNTVILLE—Organized Aug. 1, 1887.
- TALLAPOOSA—Organized Nov. 18, 1888.
- FIFTH CHURCH ATLANTA—Organized Oct. 21, 1888. Changed to Wallace April 20, 1889. Merged with Gordon Street Dec. 30, 1912.
- GEORGIA AVENUE—Organized Feb. 25, 1890.
- PALMETTO—Reported April 19, 1890. Dissolved Jan. 21, 1923.
- BARNETT—Organized Nov. 30, 1890.
- BUFORD—Organized Dec. 21, 1890.
- BARNESVILLE—Organized Jan. 25, 1891.
- LITHONIA—Reorganized April 12, 1891.
- LAWRENCEVILLE—Organized April 12, 1891. From Fairview members.
- AUSTELL—Organized Aug. 2, 1891.
- KIRKWOOD—Organized June 25, 1892.
- SENOIA—Organized Dec. 5, 1892.
- MANCHESTER—Organized July 29, 1894. Changed to HAPEVILLE April 17, 1896.
- LUTHER HAYS—Organized Sept. 29, 1894.
- RIVERDALE—Organized July 14, 1895.
- WINDER—Organized Oct. 20, 1895. To Athens Presbytery.
- MORRIS GROVE—In northern Henry County, about four miles from Stockbridge. Organized Aug. 23, 1896. Dissolved April 15, 1908.
- STACY—Reported Oct. 9, 1896. Merged with Greenville Oct. 5, 1943.
- INMAN PARK—Organized Dec. 13, 1896.
- ZEBULON—Organized July 10, 1898. Dissolved April 13, 1905.
- BAMAH—Near Luxomni in Gwinnett County. Organized Aug. 7, 1898. Dissolved April 26, 1901.
- NORTH AVENUE—Organized Dec. 4, 1898.

- KELLEY—Organized Jan. 7, 1900.
INGLESIDE—Organized May 13, 1900.
COLLEGE PARK—Organized May 20, 1900.
WESTMINSTER—Organized June 30, 1901.
BREMEN—Organized June 13, 1902. Dissolved Oct. 6, 1920.
PANTHERSVILLE—Organized June 29, 1902.
PRYOR STREET—Organized June 29, 1902.
McTYRE CHAPEL—Organized Oct. 5, 1903. Dissolved Sept. 29, 1909.
STOCKBRIDGE—Organized May 28, 1909.
ORMEWOOD—Organized June 19, 1910. To Atlanta Presbytery from U.P. Church Sept. 27, 1912.
GORDON STREET—Organized May 7, 1911.
EAST POINT—Organized Dec. 17, 1911.
MANCHESTER—Organized Nov. 30, 1913.
PORTERDALE—Organized June 17, 1917.
CAPITOL VIEW—Organized July 8, 1917.
DULUTH—Organized July 27, 1917. Dissolved April 20, 1948.
PEACHTREE ROAD—Organized Nov. 2, 1919.
OAKHURST—Organized Oct. 2, 1921.
GUM CREEK—Organized Nov. 13, 1921.
MONROE—Reorganized July 9, 1922. Dissolved April 18, 1928.
PINE GROVE—Organized July 16, 1922.
CLIFTON—Organized April 6, 1924.
PANNELL—Organized Aug. 26, 1924. Merged with Monroe July 9, 1950.
BETHEL—Organized April 11, 1925.
MORNINGSIDE—Organized Nov. 15, 1925.
OAK GROVE—East end of Gwinnett County. Organized Nov. 4, 1928. Dissolved April 15, 1947.
WOODLAWN—Organized June 30, 1929.
ALEXANDER MEMORIAL—Organized Nov. 25, 1938.
GLEN HAVEN—Organized May 19, 1939.
EMORY—Organized April 26, 1941.
SOUTH HIGHLAND—Organized Nov. 20, 1944.
COLUMBIA—Organized Feb. 16, 1947.
LAKEWOOD—Organized March 31, 1947.
WEE KIRK—Organized May 16, 1947.
CASCADE ROAD—Organized Feb. 18, 1949.
OGLETHORPE—Organized March 27, 1949.
REHOBOTH—Organized June 19, 1949.
TRINITY—Organized July 10, 1949.

DALLAS—Organized Dec. 4, 1949.
 MONROE—Reorganized July 9, 1950.
 GLENOAK—Organized July 5, 1951.
 CLAIRMONT—Organized June 19, 1952.
 MEMORIAL DRIVE—Organized April 8, 1954.
 BREMEN—Reorganized April 30, 1954.
 MOUNT VERNON—Organized May 2, 1954.
 FOREST PARK—Organized November 9, 1954.
 NORTH DECATUR—Organized Oct. 27, 1955.
 HILLSIDE—Organized June 29, 1956.
 BEN HILL—Organized Dec. 6, 1956.
 NORTHWOODS—Organized Feb. 14, 1958.
 SHALLOWFORD—Organized July 27, 1958.
 FAYETTE—Organized June 30, 1959.

These Churches were organized within the area of the Presbytery of Atlanta but were affiliated with the Presbytery of North and South Carolina in the Synod of Snedecor Memorial.

RICE MEMORIAL—Organized Dec. 1, 1923.
 TRINITY—Organized March 3, 1944.

In Presbytery of Georgia-Carolina in Synod of Georgia.
 WESTHILLS—March 27, 1955.

STATED CLERKS OF THE PRESBYTERY

HOPEWELL PRESBYTERY

1827-1833—John S. Wilson

GOOD HOPE AND FLINT RIVER

1834-1866—J. C. Patterson

ATLANTA PRESBYTERY

1866-1906—James Stacy
 1906-1907—P. P. Winn
 1907-1909—Jno. I. Armstrong
 1909-1911—H. C. Hammond
 1911-1918—W. A. Murray
 1918-1919—J. G. Herndon
 1919-1921—R. M. Stimson
 1921-1928—L. D. King
 1929-1931—J. R. Williams

1932-1936—Carl Barth
1937-1938—H. C. Smith
1938-1943—W. F. Hollingsworth
1943- . . . —W. J. Hazelwood

EVANGELISTS AND SECRETARIES OF MISSIONS ATLANTA PRESBYTERY

- WILLIAM DIMMOCK—Sunday School Missionary from 1867 till death in 1880. Lay worker until 1872 when he was ordained.
- JOHN JONES—Called to be Missionary and Evangelist October 29, 1870. Discontinued as Presbytery Evangelist October 4, 1873 due to lack of funds. Continued as volunteer missionary.
- DONALD FRASER—Pastor of Decatur Church 1872-1887. During period from 1873 he was active in church extension work in DeKalb County. During period of 1879-1890 he was made Temporary Evangelist giving part time to the work, while various ministers helped supply his church.
- JOHN ELIAS DuBOSE—Began work about January 1, 1884. Discontinued October 11, 1890 because of ill health.
- JOSEPH B. MACK—Served as Synod's Evangelist from 1890 to 1898, at which time Atlanta Presbytery was in cooperation with Synod. Became Presbytery Evangelist November 1, 1898. Resigned January 1, 1901.
- W. P. HEMPHILL—Licensed as Lay-Worker October 10, 1887. Ordained October 11, 1896. Rural Evangelist October 10, 1902. Died May 18, 1906.
- FRANK D. HUNT—Evangelist of Presbytery January 1, 1907 to December 31, 1915.
- JOHN GOFF—Presbyterial Evangelist and Superintendent of Missions January 9, 1917 to January 26, 1920.
- J. EDWIN HEMPHILL—Superintendent of Home Missions and Sabbath School Work April 14, 1920 to January 31, 1924.
- WILLIAM HUCK—Superintendent of Evangelism, Home Missions, and Sabbath School Work February 1, 1924 to 1928. Executive Secretary of Presbytery's Work 1928-1935. Executive Secretary of Home Missions 1935 to March 30, 1937.
- FRANKLIN C. TALMAGE—Temporary Secretary of Home Missions March 31, 1937 to July 15, 1937. Superintendent of

Home Missions July 15, 1937 to April 1950. Secretary of Church Extension April 1950-Dec. 31, 1956.

BONNEAU H. DICKSON—Associate Secretary, Church Extension November 1, 1956 to December 31, 1956. Executive Secretary of Church Extension January 1, 1957-.....

ATLANTA PRESBYTERY AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

Preparatory Convention—Atlanta, Ga., 1861

22nd Session—Atlanta, Ga., 1882

40th Session—Atlanta, Ga., 1900

53rd Session—North Avenue Church, Atlanta, Ga., 1913
(Joint Meeting of four Assemblies)

68th Session—Central Church, Atlanta, Ga., 1928

88th Session—First Church, Atlanta, Ga., 1948

99th Session—Druid Hills Church, Atlanta, Ga., 1959

MODERATORS

1864—At Charlotte, N. C.—Rev. John S. Wilson, D.D.; First Church Atlanta, Ga.

1887—At St. Louis, Mo.—Rev. G. B. Strickler, D.D.; Central Church, Atlanta, Ga.

1922—At Charleston, W. Va.—Rev. R. C. Reed, D.D., LL.D.; Columbia Theological Seminary.

1938—At Meridian, Miss.—Hon. Willis M. Everett, LL.D.; Elder First Church, Atlanta, Ga.

1951—At Orlando, Fla.—Hon. James Ross McCain, Ph.D.; Elder Decatur Presbyterian Church.

1955—At Richmond, Va.—Rev. James McDowell Richards, D.D.; President Columbia Theological Seminary.

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